THE VAILIMA EDITION

OF THE WORKS OF

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

P. F. COLLIER & SON
NEW YORK

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The Bridge at Grez

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THE WORKS OF
ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

AN INLAND VOYAGE
TRAVELS WITH A DONKEY
EDINBURGH
AND OTHER PAPERS

VOLUME EIGHT

P. F. COLLIER & SON
NEW YORK

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AN INLAND VOYAGE

DEDICATION

To

Sir Walter Grindlay Simpson, Bart.

My Dear Cigarette:

It was enough that you should have shared so liberally in the rains and portages of our voyage; that you should have had so hard a battle to recover the derelict Arethusa *on the flooded Oise; and that you should thenceforth have piloted a mere wreck of mankind to Origny Sainte-Benoîte and a supper so eagerly desired. It was perhaps more than enough, as you once somewhat piteously complained, that I should have set down all the strong language to you, and kept the appropriate reflections for myself. I could not in decency expose you to share the disgrace of another and more public shipwreck. But now that this voyage of ours is going into a cheap edition, that peril, we shall hope, is at an end, and I may put your name on the burgee.*

But I can not pause till I have lamented the fate of our two ships. That, sir, was not a fortunate day when we projected the possession of a canal barge; it was not a fortunate day when we shared our day-dream with the most hopeful of day-dreamers. For a while, indeed, the world looked smilingly. The barge was procured and christened, and, as the Eleven Thousand Virgins of Cologne *lay for some months, the admired of all admirers, in a pleasant river and under the walls of an ancient town. M. Mattras, the accomplished carpenter of Moret, had made her a center of emulous labor; and you will not have forgotten the amount of sweet champagne consumed in the inn at the bridge end, to give zeal to the workmen and speed to the work. On the financial aspect I would not willingly dwell. The* Eleven Thousand Virgins of Cologne

rotted in the stream where she was beautified. She felt not the impulse of the breeze; she was never harnessed to the patient track-horse. And when at length she was sold, by the indignant carpenter of Moret, there were sold along with her the Arethusa *and the* Cigarette, *she of cedar, she, as we knew so keenly on a portage, of solid-hearted English oak. Now these historic vessels fly the tricolor and are known by new and alien names.*

R. L. S.

PREFACE TO FIRST EDITION

To equip so small a book with a preface is, I am half afraid, to sin against proportion. But a preface is more than an author can resist, for it is the reward of his labors. When the foundation-stone is laid, the architect appears with his plans, and struts for an hour before the public eye. So with the writer in his preface: he may have never a word to say, but he must show himself for a moment in the portico, hat in hand, and with an urbane demeanor.

It is best, in such circumstances, to represent a delicate shade of manner between humility and superiority: as if the book had been written by some one else, and you had merely run over it and inserted what was good. But for my part I have not yet learned the trick to that perfection; I am not yet able to dissemble the warmth of my sentiments toward a reader; and if I meet him on the threshold, it is to invite him in with country cordiality.

To say truth, I had no sooner finished reading this little book in proof than I was seized upon by a distressing apprehension. It occurred to me that I might not only be the first to read these pages, but the last as well; that I might have pioneered this very smiling tract of country all in vain, and find not a soul to follow in my steps. The more I thought, the more I disliked the notion; until the distaste grew into a sort of panic terror and I rushed into this Preface, which is no more than an advertisement for readers.

What am I to say for my book? Caleb and Joshua brought back from Palestine a formidable bunch of grapes; alas! my book produces naught so nourishing; and for the matter of that, we live in an age when people prefer a definition to any quantity of fruit.

I wonder, would a negative be found enticing? for,

from the negative point of view, I flatter myself this volume has a certain stamp. Although it runs to considerably upward of two hundred pages, it contains not a single reference to the imbecility of God's universe, nor so much as a single hint that I could have made a better one myself.—I really do not know where my head can have been. I seem to have forgotten all that makes it glorious to be man.—'Tis an omission that renders the book philosophically unimportant; but I am in hopes the eccentricity may please in frivolous circles.

To the friend who accompanied me, I owe many thanks already, indeed I wish I owed him nothing else; but at this moment I feel toward him an almost exaggerated tenderness. He, at least, will become my reader: if it were only to follow his own travels alongside of mine.

R. L. S.

AN INLAND VOYAGE

ANTWERP TO BOOM

WE MADE a great stir in *Antwerp Docks.* A stevedore and a lot of dock porters took up the two canoes, and ran with them for the slip. A crowd of children followed cheering. The *Cigarette* went off in a splash and a bubble of small breaking water. Next moment the *Arethusa* was after her. A steamer was coming down, men on the paddle-box shouted hoarse warnings, the stevedore and his porters were bawling from the quay. But in a stroke or two the canoes were away out in the middle of the *Scheldt,* and all steamers, and stevedores, and other longshore vanities were left behind.

The sun shone brightly; the tide was making—four jolly miles an hour; the wind blew steadily, with occasional squalls. For my part, I had never been in a canoe under sail in my life; and my first experiment out in the middle of this big river was not made without some trepidation What would happen when the wind first caught my little canvas? I suppose it was almost as trying a venture into the regions of the unknown as to publish a first book, or to marry. But my doubts were not of long duration; and in five minutes you will not be surprised to learn that I had tied my sheet.

I own I was a little struck by this circumstance myself; of course, in company with the rest of my fellow men, I had always tied the sheet in a sailing-boat; but in so little and crank a concern as a canoe, and with these charging squalls, I was not prepared to find myself follow the same principle; and it inspired me with some contemptuous views of our regard for life. It is certainly easier to smoke with the sheet fastened; but I had never before weighed a com-

fortable pipe of tobacco against an obvious risk, and gravely elected for the comfortable pipe. It is a commonplace, that we can not answer for ourselves before we have been tried. But it is not so common a reflection, and surely more consoling, that we usually find ourselves a great deal braver and better than we thought. I believe this is every one's experience: but an apprehension that they may belie themselves in the future prevents mankind from trumpeting this cheerful sentiment abroad. I wish sincerely, for it would have saved me much trouble, there had been some one to put me in a good heart about life when I was younger; to tell me how dangers are most portentous on a distant sight; and how the good in a man's spirit will not suffer itself to be overlaid, and rarely or never deserts him in the hour of need. But we are all for tootling on the sentimental flute in literature; and not a man among us will go to the head of the march to sound the heady drums.

It was agreeable upon the river. A barge or two went past laden with hay. Reeds and willows bordered the stream; and cattle and gray, venerable horses came and hung their mild heads over the embankment. Here and there was a pleasant village among trees, with a noisy shipping yard; here and there a villa in a lawn. The wind served us well up the *Scheldt* and therefter up the *Rupel;* and we were running pretty free when we began to sight the brickyards of *Boom,* lying for a long way on the right bank of the river. The left bank was still green and pastoral, with alleys of trees along the embankment, and here and there a flight of steps to serve a ferry, where perhaps there sat a woman with her elbows on her knees, or an old gentleman with a staff and silver spectacles. But *Boom* and its brickyards grew smokier and shabbier with every minute; until a great church with a clock, and a wooden bridge over the river, indicated the central quarters of the town.

Boom is not a nice place, and is only remarkable for one thing: that the majority of the inhabitants have a private opinion that they can speak English, which is not justified by fact. This gave a kind of haziness to our intercourse. As for the *Hôtel de la Navigation,* I think

it is the worst feature of the place. It boasts of a sanded parlor, with a bar at one end, looking on the street; and another sanded parlor, darker and colder, with an empty bird-cage and a tricolor subscription box by way of sole adornment, where we made shift to dine in the company of three uncommunicative engineer apprentices and a silent bagman. The food, as usual in *Belgium,* was of a nondescript occasional character; indeed I have never been able to detect anything in the nature of a meal among this pleasing people; they seem to peck and trifle with viands all day long in an amateur spirit: tentatively French, truly German, and somehow falling between the two.

The empty bird-cage, swept and garnished, and with no trace of the old piping favorite, save where two wires had been pushed apart to hold its lump of sugar, carried with it a sort of graveyard cheer. The engineer apprentices would have nothing to say to us, nor indeed to the bagman; but talked low and sparingly to one another, or raked us in the gaslight with a gleam of spectacles. For though handsome lads, they were all (in the Scotch phrase) barnacled.

There was an English maid in the hotel, who had been long enough out of *England* to pick up all sorts of funny foreign idioms, and all sorts of curious foreign ways, which need not here be specified. She spoke to us very fluently in her jargon, asked us information as to the manners of the present day in *England,* and obligingly corrected us when we attempted to answer. But as we were dealing with a woman, perhaps our information was not so much thrown away as it appeared. The sex likes to pick up knowledge and yet preserve its superiority. It is good policy, and almost necessary in the circumstances. If a man finds a woman admires him, were it only for his acquaintance with geography, he will begin at once to build upon the admiration. It is only by unintermittent snubbing that the pretty ones can keep us in our place. Men, as Miss *Howe* or Miss *Harlowe* would have said, "are such *encroachers.*" For my part, I am body and soul with the women; and after a well-married couple

there is nothing so beautiful in the world as the myth of the divine huntress. It is no use for a man to take to the woods; we know him; *Anthony* tried the same thing long ago, and had a pitiful time of it by all accounts. But there is this about some women, which overtops the best gymnosophist among men, that they suffice to themselves, and can walk in a high and cold zone without the countenance of any trousered being. I declare, although the reverse of a professed ascetic, I am more obliged to women for this ideal than I should be to the majority of them, or indeed to any but one, for a spontaneous kiss. There is nothing so encouraging as the spectacle of self-sufficiency. And when I think of the slim and lovely maidens, running the woods all night to the note of *Diana's* horn; moving among the old oaks, as fancy-free as they; things of the forest and the starlight, not touched by the commotion of man's hot and turbid life—although there are plenty other ideals that I should prefer—I find my heart beat at the thought of this one. 'Tis to fail in life, but to fail with what a grace! That is not lost which is not regretted. And where—here slips out the male—where would be much of the glory of inspiring love, if there were no contempt to overcome?

ON THE WILLEBROEK CANAL

NEXT morning, when we set forth on the *Willebroek Canal,* the rain began heavy and chill. The water of the canal stood at about the drinking temperature of tea; and under this cold aspersion the surface was covered with steam. The exhilaration of departure, and the easy motion of the boats under each stroke of the paddles, supported us through this misfortune while it lasted; and when the cloud passed and the sun came out again, our spirits went up above the range of stay-at-home humors. A good breeze rustled and shivered in the rows of trees that bordered the canal. The leaves flickered in and out of the light in tumultuous masses. It seemed sailing weather to eye and ear; but down between the banks the wind reached us only in faint and desultory puffs. There was hardly enough to steer by. Progress was intermittent and unsatisfactory. A jocular person, of marine antecedents, hailed us from the tow-path with a *"C'est vite, mais c'est long."*

The canal was busy enough. Every now and then we met or overtook a long string of boats, with great green tillers; high sterns with a window on either side of the rudder, and perhaps a jug or a flower-pot in one of the windows; a dingey following behind; a woman busied about the day's dinner, and a handful of children. These barges were all tied one behind the other with tow ropes, to the number of twenty-five or thirty; and the line was headed and kept in motion by a steamer of strange construction. It had neither paddle-wheel nor screw; but by some gear not rightly comprehensible to the unmechanical mind, it fetched up over its bow a small bright chain which lay along the bottom of the canal, and, paying it out again over the stern, dragged itself forward, link by link, with its whole retinue of loaded scows. Until one had found out the key to the enigma, there was something solemn

and uncomfortable in the progress of one of these trains, as it moved gently along the water with nothing to mark its advance but an eddy alongside dying away into the wake.

Of all the creatures of commercial enterprise, a canal barge is by far the most delightful to consider. It may spread its sails, and then you see it sailing high above the tree-tops and the windmill, sailing on the aqueduct, sailing through the green cornlands: the most picturesque of things amphibious. Or the horse plods along at a foot-pace as if there were no such thing as business in the world; and the man dreaming at the tiller sees the same spire on the horizon all day long. It is a mystery how things ever get to their destination at this rate; and to see the barges waiting their turn at a lock affords a fine lesson of how easily the world may be taken. There should be many contented spirits on board, for such a life is both to travel and to stay at home.

The chimney smokes for dinner as you go along; the banks of the canal slowly unroll their scenery to contemplative eyes; the barge floats by great forests and through great cities with their public buildings and their lamps at night; and for the bargee, in his floating home, "traveling abed," it is merely as if he were listening to another man's story or turning the leaves of a picture book in which he had no concern. He may take his afternoon walk in some foreign country on the banks of the canal, and then come home to dinner at his own fireside.

There is not enough exercise in such a life for any high measure of health; but a high measure of health is only necessary for unhealthy people. The slug of a fellow, who is never ill nor well, has a quiet time of it in life, and dies all the easier.

I am sure I would rather be a bargee than occupy any position under Heaven that required attendance at an office. There are few callings, I should say, where a man gives up less of his liberty in return for regular meals. The bargee is on shipboard; he is master in his own ship; he can land whenever he will; he can never be kept beating off a lee shore a whole frosty night when the sheets are

as hard as iron; and so far as I can make out, time stands as nearly still with him as is compatible with the return of bedtime or the dinner-hour. It is not easy to see why a bargee should ever die.

Half-way between *Willebroek* and *Villevorde,* in a beautiful reach of canal like a squire's avenue, we went ashore to lunch. There were two eggs, a junk of bread, and a bottle of wine on board the *Arethusa;* and two eggs and an Etna cooking apparatus on board the *Cigarette.*

The master of the latter boat smashed one of the eggs in the course of disembarkation; but observing pleasantly that it might still be cooked *à la papier,* he dropped it into the Etna, in its covering of Flemish newspaper. We landed in a blink of fine weather; but we had not been two minutes ashore before the wind freshened into half a gale, and the rain began to patter on our shoulders. We sat as close about the Etna as we could. The spirits burned with great ostentation; the grass caught flame every minute or two, and had to be trodden out; and before long there were several burned fingers of the party. But the solid quantity of cookery accomplished was out of proportion with so much display; and when we desisted, after two applications of the fire, the sound egg was a little more than loo-warm; and as for *à la papier,* it was a cold and sordid *fricassée* of printer's ink and broken egg-shell. We made shift to roast the other two by putting them close to the burning spirits, and that with better success. And then we uncorked the bottle of wine, and sat down in a ditch with our canoe aprons over our knees. It rained smartly. Discomfort, when it is honestly uncomfortable and makes no nauseous pretensions to the contrary, is a vastly humorous business; and people well steeped and stupefied in the open air are in a good vein for laughter. From this point of view, even egg *à la papier* offered by way of food may pass muster as a sort of accessory to the fun. But this manner of jest, although it may be taken in good part, does not invite repetition; and from that time forward the Etna voyaged like a gentleman in the locker of the *Cigarette.*

It is almost unnecessary to mention that when lunch was over and we got aboard again and made sail, the wind promptly died away. The rest of the journey to *Villevorde*, we still spread our canvas to the unfavoring air, and with now and then a puff, and now and then a spell of paddling, drifted along from lock to lock between the orderly trees.

It was a fine, green, fat landscape, or rather a mere green water-lane going on from village to village. Things had a settled look, as in places long lived in. Crop-headed children spat upon us from the bridges as we went below, with a true conservative feeling. But even more conservative were the fishermen, intent upon their floats, who let us go by without one glance. They perched upon sterlings and buttresses and along the slope of the embankment, gently occupied. They were indifferent like pieces of dead nature. They did not move any more than if they had been fishing in an old Dutch print. The leaves fluttered, the water lapped, but they continued in one stay, like so many churches established by law. You might have trepanned every one of their innocent heads and found no more than so much coiled fishing line below their skulls. I do not care for your stalwart fellows in india-rubber stockings breasting up mountain torrents with a salmon rod; but I do dearly love the class of man who plies his unfruitful art forever and a day by still and depopulated waters.

At the lock just beyond *Villevorde* there was a lock mistress who spoke French comprehensibly, and told us we were still a couple of leagues from *Brussels*. At the same place the rain began again. It fell in straight, parallel lines, and the surface of the canal was thrown up into an infinity of little crystal fountains. There were no beds to be had in the neighborhood. Nothing for it but to lay the sails aside and address ourselves to steady paddling in the rain.

Beautiful country houses, with clocks and long lines of shuttered windows, and fine old trees standing in groves and avenues, gave a rich and somber aspect in the rain and the deepening dusk to the shores of the canal. I

seem to have seen something of the same effect in engravings: opulent landscapes, deserted and overhung with the passage of storm. And throughout we had the escort of a hooded cart, which trotted shabbily along the towpath, and kept at an almost uniform distance in our wake.

THE ROYAL SPORT NAUTIQUE

THE rain took off near *Laeken*. But the sun was already down; the air was chill; and we had scarcely a dry stitch between the pair of us. Nay, now we found ourselves near the end of the *Allée Verte*, on the very threshold of *Brussels* we were confronted by a serious difficulty. The shores were closely lined by canal-boats waiting their turn at the lock. Nowhere was there any convenient landing-place; nowhere so much as a stable-yard to leave the canoes in for the night. We scrambled ashore and entered an estaminet where some sorry fellows were drinking with the landlord. The landlord was pretty round with us; he knew of no coach-house or stable-yard, nothing of the sort; and seeing we had come with no mind to drink, he did not conceal his impatience to be rid of us. One of the sorry fellows came to the rescue. Somewhere in the corner of the basin there was a slip, he informed us, and something else besides, not very clearly defined by him, but hopefully construed by his hearers.

Sure enough there was the slip in the corner of the basin; and at the top of it two nice-looking lads in boating clothes. The *Arethusa* addressed himself to these. One of them said there would be no difficulty about a night's lodging for our boats; and the other, taking a cigarette from his lips, inquired if they were made by *Searle & Son*. The name was quite an introduction. Half a dozen other young men came out of a boat-house bearing the superscription ROYAL SPORT NAUTIQUE, and joined in the talk. They were all very polite, voluble, and enthusiastic; and their discourse was interlarded with English boating terms, and the names of English boat-builders and English clubs. I do not know, to my shame, any spot in my native land where I should have been so warmly received by the same number of people. We were En-

glish boating-men, and the Belgian boating-men fell upon our necks. I wonder if French Huguenots were as cordially greeted by English Protestants when they came across the Channel out of great tribulation? But, after all, what religion knits people so closely as common sport?

The canoes were carried into the boat-house; they were washed down for us by the club servants, the sails were hung out to dry, and everything made as snug and tidy as a picture. And in the mean while we were led upstairs by our new-found brethren, for so more than one of them stated the relationship, and made free of their lavatory. This one lent us soap, that one a towel, a third and fourth helped us to undo our bags. And all the time such questions, such assurances of respect and sympathy! I declare I never knew what glory was before.

"Yes, yes, the *Royal Sport Nautique* is the oldest club in *Belgium.*"

"We number two hundred."

"We"—this is not a substantive speech, but an abstract of many speeches, the impression left upon my mind after a great deal of talk; and very youthful, pleasant, natural, and patriotic it seems to me to be—"We have gained all races, except those where we were cheated by the *French.*"

"You must leave all your wet things to be dried."

"Oh! *entre frères!* In any boat-house in *England* we should find the same." (I cordially hope they might.)

"En Angleterre, vous employez des sliding-seats, n'est-ce pas?"

"We are all employed in commerce during the day; but in the evening, *voyez-vous, nous sommes serieux.*"

These were the words. They were all employed over the frivolous mercantile concerns of *Belgium* during the day; but in the evening they found some hours for the serious concerns of life. I may have a wrong idea of wisdom, but I think that was a very wise remark. People connected with literature and philosophy are busy all their days in getting rid of second-hand notions and false standards. It is their profession, in the sweat of their brows, by dogged thinking, to recover their old fresh view of life, and distinguish what they really and orig-

inally like from what they have only learned to tolerate perforce. And these *Royal Nautical Sportsmen* had the distinction still quite legible in their hearts. They had still those clean perceptions of what is nice and nasty, what is interesting and what is dull, which envious old gentlemen refer to as illusions. The nightmare illusion of middle age, the bear's hug of custom gradually squeezing the life out of a man's soul, had not yet begun for these happy-star'd young *Belgians*. They still knew that the interest they took in their business was a trifling affair compared to their spontaneous, long-suffering affection for nautical sports. To know what you prefer, instead of humbly saying Amen to what the world tells you you ought to prefer, is to have kept your soul alive. Such a man may be generous; he may be honest in something more than the commercial sense; he may love his friends with an elective, personal sympathy, and not accept them as an adjunct of the station to which he has been called. He may be a man, in short, acting on his own instincts, keeping in his own shape that *God* made him in; and not a mere crank in the social engine house, welded on principles that he does not understand, and for purposes that he does not care for.

For will any one dare to tell me that business is more entertaining than fooling among boats? He must have never seen a boat, or never seen an office, who says so. And for certain the one is a great deal better for the health. There should be nothing so much a man's business as his amusements. Nothing but money-grubbing can be put forward to the contrary; no one but

> Mammon, the least erected spirit that fell
> From Heaven,

durst risk a word in answer. It is but a lying cant that would represent the merchant and the banker as people disinterestedly toiling for mankind, and then most useful when they are most absorbed in their transactions; for the man is more important than his services. And when my *Royal Nautical Sportsman* shall have so far fallen from his hopeful youth that he can not pluck up an en-

thusiasm over anything but his ledger, I venture to doubt whether he will be near so nice a fellow, and whether he would welcome, with so good a grace, a couple of drenched *Englishmen* paddling into *Brussels* in the dusk.

When we had changed our wet clothes and drunk a glass of pale ale to the club's prosperity, one of their number escorted us to a hotel. He would not join us at our dinner, but he had no objection to a glass of wine. Enthusiasm is very wearing; and I begin to understand why prophets were unpopular in *Judœa,* where they were best known. For three stricken hours did this excellent young man sit beside us to dilate on boats and boat-races; and before he left he was kind enough to order our bedroom candles.

We endeavored now and again to change the subject; but the diversion did not last a moment: the *Royal Nautical Sportsman* bridled, shied, answered the question, and then breasted once more into the swelling tide of his subject. I call it his subject; but I think it was he who was subjected. The *Arethusa,* who holds all racing as a creature of the devil, found himself in a pitiful dilemma. He durst not own his ignorance for the honor of old *England,* and spoke away about English clubs and English oarsmen whose fame had never before come to his ears. Several times, and, once above all, on the question of sliding-seats, he was within an ace of exposure. As for the *Cigarette,* who has rowed races in the heat of his blood, but now disowns these slips of his wanton youth, his case was still more desperate; for the *Royal Nautical* proposed that he should take an oar in one of their eights on the morrow, to compare the English with the Belgian stroke. I could see my friend perspiring in his chair whenever that particular topic came up. And there was yet another proposal which had the same effect on both of us. It appeared that the champion canoeist of *Europe* (as well as most other champions) was a *Royal Nautical Sportsman.* And if we would only wait until the *Sunday,* this infernal paddler would be so condescending as to accompany us on our next stage. Neither of us had the least desire to drive the coursers of the sun against *Apollo.*

When the young man was gone, we countermanded our candles, and ordered some brandy and water. The great billows had gone over our head. The *Royal Nautical Sportsmen* were as nice young fellows as a man would wish to see, but they were a trifle too young and a thought too nautical for us. We began to see that we were old and cynical; we liked ease and the agreeable rambling of the human mind about this and the other subject; we did not want to disgrace our native land by messing at eight, or toiling pitifully in the wake of the champion canoeist. In short, we had recourse to flight. It seemed ungrateful, but we tried to make that good on a card loaded with sincere compliments. And indeed it was no time for scruples; we seemed to feel the hot breath of the champion on our necks.

AT MAUBEUGE

PARTLY from the terror we had of our good friends the *Royal Nauticals,* partly from the fact that there were no fewer than fifty-five locks between *Brussels* and *Charleroi,* we concluded that we should travel by train across the frontier, boats and all. Fifty-five locks in a day's journey was pretty well tantamount to trudging the whole distance on foot, with the canoes upon our shoulders, an object of astonishment to the trees on the canal side, and of honest derision to all right-thinking children.

To pass the frontier, even in a train, is a difficult matter for the *Arethusa.* He is, somehow or other, a marked man for the official eye. Wherever he journeys, there are the officers gathered together. Treaties are solemnly signed, foreign ministers, ambassadors, and consuls sit throned in state from *China* to *Peru,* and the Union Jack flutters on all the winds of heaven. Under these safeguards, portly clergymen, schoolmistresses, gentlemen in gray tweed suits, and all the ruck and rabble of British touristry pour unhindered, *Murray* in hand, over the railways of the Continent, and yet the slim person of the *Arethusa* is taken in the meshes, while these great fish go on their way rejoicing. If he travels without a passport, he is cast, without any figure about the matter, into noisome dungeons: if his papers are in order, he is suffered to go his way indeed, but not until he has been humiliated by a general incredulity. He is a born British subject, yet he has never succeeded in persuading a single official of his nationality. He flatters himself he is indifferent honest; yet he is rarely known for anything better than a spy, and there is no absurd and disreputable means of livelihood but has been attributed to him in some heat of official or popular distrust. . . .

For the life of me I can not understand it. I, too, have

been knolled to church and sat at good men's feasts, but I bear no mark of it. I am as strange as a Jack Indian to their official spectacles. I might come from any part of the globe, it seems, except from where I do. My ancestors have labored in vain, and the glorious Constitution can not protect me in my walks abroad. It is a great thing, believe me, to present a good normal type of the nation you belong to.

Nobody else was asked for his papers on the way to *Maubeuge,* but I was; and although I clung to my rights, I had to choose at last between accepting the humiliation and being left behind by the train. I was sorry to give way, but I wanted to get to *Maubeuge.*

Maubeuge is a fortified town with a very good inn, the *Grand Cerf.* It seemed to be inhabited principally by soldiers and bagmen; at least, these were all that we saw except the hotel servants. We had to stay there some time, for the canoes were in no hurry to follow us, and at last stuck hopelessly in the custom-house until we went back to liberate them. There was nothing to do, nothing to see. We had good meals, which was a great matter, but that was all.

The *Cigarette* was nearly taken up upon a charge of drawing the fortifications: a feat of which he was hopelessly incapable. And besides, as I suppose each belligerent nation has a plan of the other's fortified places already, these precautions are of the nature of shutting the stable door after the steed is away. But I have no doubt they help to keep up a good spirit at home. It is a great thing if you can persuade people that they are somehow or other partakers in a mystery. It makes them feel bigger. Even the Freemasons, who have been shown up to satiety, preserve a kind of pride; and not a grocer among them, however honest, harmless, and empty-headed he may feel himself to be at bottom, but comes home from one of their cœnacula with a portentous significance for himself.

It is an odd thing how happily two people, if there are two, can live in a place where they have no acquaintance. I think the spectacle of a whole life in which you have no part paralyzes personal desire. You are content to

become a mere spectator. The baker stands in his door; the colonel with his three medals goes by to the *café* at night; the troops drum and trumpet and man the ramparts as bold as so many lions. It would task language to say how placidly you behold all this. In a place where you have taken some root you are provoked out of your indifference; you have a hand in the game,—your friends are fighting with the army. But in a strange town, not small enough to grow too soon familiar, nor so large as to have laid itself out for travelers, you stand so far apart from the business that you positively forget it would be possible to go nearer; you have so little human interest around you that you do not remember yourself to be a man. Perhaps in a very short time you would be one no longer. Gymnosophists go into a wood with all nature seething around them, with romance on every side; it would be much more to the purpose if they took up their abode in a dull country town where they should see just so much of humanity as to keep them from desiring more, and only the stale externals of man's life. These externals are as dead to us as so many formalities, and speak a dead language in our eyes and ears. They have no more meaning than an oath or a salutation. We are so much accustomed to see married couples going to church of a *Sunday* that we have clean forgotten what they represent; and novelists are driven to rehabilitate adultery, no less, when they wish to show us what a beautiful thing it is for a man and a woman to live for each other.

One person in *Maubeuge,* however, showed me something more than his outside. That was the driver of the hotel omnibus: a mean-enough looking little man, as well as I can remember, but with a spark of something human in his soul. He had heard of our little journey, and came to me at once in envious sympathy. How he longed to travel! he told me. How he longed to be somewhere else, and see the round world before he went into the grave!

"Here I am," said he. "I drive to the station. Well. And then I drive back again to the hotel. And so on every day and all the week round. My *God,* is that life?" I could not say I thought it was—for him. He pressed me

to tell him where I had been, and where I hoped to go; and as he listened I declare the fellow sighed. Might not this have been a brave African traveler, or gone to the *Indies* after *Drake?* But it is an evil age for the gipsily inclined among men. He who can sit squarest on a three-legged stool, he it is who has the wealth and glory.

I wonder if my friend is still driving the omnibus for the *Grand Cerf!* Not very likely, I believe; for I think he was on the eve of mutiny when we passed through, and perhaps our passage determined him for good. Better a thousand times that he should be a tramp, and mend pots and pans by the wayside, and sleep under trees, and see the dawn and the sunset every day above a new horizon. I think I hear you say that it is a respectable position to drive an omnibus? Very well. What right has he who likes it not to keep those who would like it dearly out of this respectable position? Suppose a dish were not to my taste, and you told me that it was a favorite among the rest of the company, what should I conclude from that? Not to finish the dish against my stomach, I suppose.

Respectability is a very good thing in its way, but it does not rise superior to all considerations. I would not for a moment venture to hint that it was a matter of taste; but I think I will go as far as this: that if a position is admittedly unkind, uncomfortable, unnecessary, and superfluously useless, although it were as respectable as the Church of *England,* the sooner a man is out of it, the better for himself, and all concerned.

ON THE SAMBRE CANALIZED

TO QUARTES

ABOUT three in the afternoon the whole establishment of the *Grand Cerf* accompanied us to the water's edge. The man of the omnibus was there with haggard eyes. Poor cage-bird! Do I not remember the time when I myself haunted the station, to watch train after train carry its complement of freemen into the night, and read the names of distant places on the time-bills with indescribable longings?

We were not clear of the fortifications before the rain began. The wind was contrary, and blew in furious gusts; nor were the aspects of nature any more clement than the doings of the sky. For we passed through a blighted country, sparsely covered with brush, but handsomely enough diversified with factory chimneys. We landed in a soiled meadow among some pollards, and there smoked a pipe in a flaw of fair weather. But the wind blew so hard we could get little else to smoke. There were no natural objects in the neighborhood, but some sordid workshops. A group of children, headed by a tall girl, stood and watched us from a little distance all the time we stayed. I heartily wonder what they thought of us.

At *Hautmont,* the lock was almost impassable; the landing-place being steep and high, and the launch at a long distance. Near a dozen grimy workmen lent us a hand. They refused any reward; and, what is much better, refused it handsomely, without conveying any sense of insult. "It is a way we have in our countryside," said they. And a very becoming way it is. In *Scotland,* where also you will get services for nothing, the good people reject your money as if you had been trying to corrupt a voter. When people take the trouble to do dignified acts, it is worth while to take a little more, and allow the

dignity to be common to all concerned. But in our brave Saxon countries, where we plod threescore years and ten in the mud, and the wind keeps singing in our ears from birth to burial, we do our good and bad with a high hand and almost offensively; and make even our alms a witness-bearing and an act of war against the wrong.

After *Hautmont,* the sun came forth again and the wind went down; and a little paddling took us beyond the iron works and through a delectable land. The river wound among low hills, so that sometimes the sun was at our backs and sometimes it stood right ahead, and the river before us was one sheet of intolerable glory. On either hand meadows and orchards bordered, with a margin of sedge and water flowers, upon the river. The hedges were of great height, woven about the trunks of hedgerow elms; and the fields, as they were often very small, looked like a series of bowers along the stream. There was never any prospect; sometimes a hilltop with its trees would look over the nearest hedgerow, just to make a middle distance for the sky; but that was all. The heaven was bare of clouds. The atmosphere, after the rain, was of enchanting purity. The river doubled among the hillocks, a shining strip of mirror glass; and the dip of the paddles set the flowers shaking along the brink.

In the meadows wandered black and white cattle fantastically marked. One beast, with a white head and the rest of the body glossy black, came to the edge to drink, and stood gravely twitching his ears at me as I went by, like some sort of preposterous clergyman in a play. A moment after I heard a loud plunge, and, turning my head, saw the clergyman struggling to shore. The bank had given way under his feet.

Besides the cattle, we saw no living things except a few birds and a great many fishermen. These sat along the edges of the meadows, sometimes with one rod, sometimes with as many as half a score. They seemed stupefied with contentment; and, when we induced them to exchange a few words with us about the weather, their voices sounded quiet and far away. There was a strange diversity of opinion among them as to the kind of fish for which they

set their lures; although they were all agreed in this, that the river was abundantly supplied. Where it was plain that no two of them had ever caught the same kind of fish, we could not help suspecting that perhaps not any one of them had ever caught a fish at all. I hope, since the afternoon was so lovely, that they were one and all rewarded; and that a silver booty went home in every basket for the pot. Some of my friends would cry shame on me for this; but I prefer a man, were he only an angler, to the bravest pair of gills in all *God's* waters. I do not affect fishes unless when cooked in sauce; whereas an angler is an important piece of river scenery, and hence deserves some recognition among canoeists. He can always tell you where you are, after a mild fashion; and his quiet presence serves to accentuate the solitude and stillness, and remind you of the glittering citizens below your boat.

The *Sambre* turned so industriously to and fro among his little hills that it was past six before we drew near the lock at *Quartes*. There were some children on the tow-path, with whom the *Cigarette* fell into a chaffing talk as they ran along beside us. It was in vain that I warned him. In vain I told him in English that boys were the most dangerous creatures; and if once you began with them, it was safe to end in a shower of stones. For my own part, whenever anything was addressed to me, I smiled gently and shook my head, as though I were an inoffensive person inadequately acquainted with French. For, indeed, I have had such an experience at home that I would sooner meet many wild animals than a troop of healthy urchins.

But I was doing injustice to these peaceable young *Hainaulters*. When the *Cigarette* went off to make inquiries, I got out upon the bank to smoke a pipe and superintend the boats, and became at once the center of much amiable curiosity. The children had been joined by this time by a young woman and a mild lad who had lost an arm; and this gave me more security. When I let slip my first word or so in French, a little girl nodded her head with a comical grown-up air. "Ah, you see," she

said, "he understands well enough now; he was just making believe." And the little group laughed together very good-naturedly.

They were much impressed when they heard we came from *England;* and the little girl proffered the information that *England* was an island "and a far way from here —*bien loin d'ici.*"

"Ay, you may say that, a far way from here," said the lad with one arm.

I was nearly as homesick as ever I was in my life; they seemed to make it such an incalculable distance to the place where I first saw the day.

They admired the canoes very much. And I observed one piece of delicacy in these children which is worthy of record. They had been deafening us for the last hundred yards with petitions for a sail; ay, and they deafened us to the same tune next morning when we came to start; but then, when the canoes were lying empty, there was no word of any such petition. Delicacy? or perhaps a bit of fear for the water in so crank a vessel? I hate cynicism a great deal worse than I do the devil; unless perhaps, the two were the same thing? And yet 'tis a good tonic; the cold tub and bath-towel of the sentiments; and positively necessary to life in cases of advanced sensibility.

From the boats they turned to my costume. They could not make enough of my red sash; and my knife filled them with awe.

"They make them like that in *England,*" said the boy with one arm. I was glad he did not know how badly we make them in *England* nowadays. "They are for people who go away to sea," he added, "and to defend one's life against great fish."

I felt I was becoming a more and more romantic figure to the little group at every word. And so I suppose I was. Even my pipe, although it was an ordinary French clay, pretty well "trousered," as they call it, would have a rarity in their eyes, as a thing coming from so far away. And if my feathers were not very fine in themselves, they were all from oversea. One thing in my outfit, however, tickled them out of all politeness; and that was the be-

mired condition of my canvas shoes. I suppose they were sure the mud at any rate was a home product. The little girl (who was the genius of the party) displayed her own sabots in competition; and I wish you could have seen how gracefully and merrily she did it.

The young woman's milk can, a great amphora of hammered brass, stood some way off upon the sward. I was glad of an opportunity to divert public attention from myself and return some of the compliments I had received. So I admired it cordially both for form and color, telling them, and very truly, that it was as beautiful as gold. They were not surprised. The things were plainly the boast of the countryside. And the children expatiated on the costliness of these *amphoræ,* which sell sometimes as high as thirty francs apiece; told me how they were carried on donkeys, one on either side of the saddle, a brave caparison in themselves; and how they were to be seen all over the district, and at the larger farms in great number and of great size.

PONT-SUR-SAMBRE

WE ARE PEDLERS

THE *Cigarette* returned with good news. There were beds to be had some ten minutes' walk from where we were, at a place called *Pont.* We stowed the canoes in a granary, and asked among the children for a guide. The circle at once widened round us, and our offers of reward were received in dispiriting silence. We were plainly a pair of *Bluebeards* to the children; they might speak to us in public places, and where they had the advantage of numbers; but it was another thing to venture off alone with two uncouth and legendary characters, who had dropped from the clouds upon their hamlet this quiet afternoon, sashed and beknived, and with a flavor of great voyages. The owner of the granary came to our assistance, singled out one little fellow, and threatened him with corporalities; or I suspect we should have had to find the way for ourselves. As it was, he was more frightened at the granary man than the strangers, having perhaps had some experience of the former. But I fancy his little heart must have been going at a fine rate, for he kept trotting at a respectful distance in front, and looking back at us with scared eyes. Not otherwise may the children of the young world have guided *Jove* or one of his *Olympian* compeers on an adventure.

A miry lane led us up from *Quartes,* with its church and bickering windmill. The hinds were trudging homeward from the fields. A brisk little old woman passed us by. She was seated across a donkey between a pair of glittering milk cans, and, as she went, she kicked jauntily with her heels upon the donkey's side, and scattered shrill remarks among the wayfarers. It was notable that none of the tired men took the trouble to reply. Our conductor soon led us out of the lane and across country. The sun

had gone down, but the west in front of us was one lake of level gold. The path wandered a while in the open, and then passed under a trellis like a bower indefinitely prolonged. On either hand were shadowy orchards; cottages lay low among the leaves and sent their smoke to heaven; every here and there, in an opening, appeared the great gold face of the west.

I never saw the *Cigarette* in such an idyllic frame of mind. He waxed positively lyrical in praise of country scenes. I was little less exhilarated myself; the mild air of the evening, the shadows, the rich lights, and the silence made a symphonious accompaniment about our walk; and we both determined to avoid towns for the future and sleep in hamlets.

At last the path went between two houses, and turned the party out into a wide, muddy highroad, bordered, as far as the eye could reach on either hand by an unsightly village. The houses stood well back, leaving a ribbon of waste land on either side of the road, where there were stacks of firewood, carts, barrows, rubbish heaps, and a little doubtful grass.

Away on the left, a gaunt tower stood in the middle of the street. What it had been in past ages I know not: probably a hold in time of war; but nowadays it bore an illegible dial-plate in its upper parts, and near the bottom an iron letter-box.

The inn to which we had been recommended at *Quartes* was full, or else the landlady did not like our looks. I ought to say, that with our long, damp india-rubber bags, we presented rather a doubtful type of civilization: like rag-and-bone men, the *Cigarette* imagined. "These gentlemen are pedlers?"—*Ces messieurs sont des marchands?* —asked the landlady. And then, without waiting for an answer, which I suppose she thought superfluous in so plain a case, recommended us to a butcher who lived hard by the tower and took in travelers to lodge.

Thither went we. But the butcher was flitting, and all his beds were taken down. Or else he didn't like our look. As a parting shot, we had, "These gentlemen are pedlers?"

It began to grow dark in earnest. We could no longer distinguish the faces of the people who passed us by with an inarticulate good evening. And the householders of *Pont* seemed very economical with their oil, for we saw not a single window lighted in all that long village. I believe it is the longest village in the world; but I daresay in our predicament every pace counted three times over. We were much cast down when we came to the last *auberge,* and, looking in at the dark door, asked timidly if we could sleep there for the night. A female voice assented, in no very friendly tones. We clapped the bags down and found our way to chairs.

The place was in total darkness, save a red glow in the chinks and ventilators of the stove. But now the landlady lit a lamp to see her new guests; I suppose the darkness was what saved us another expulsion, for I can not say she looked gratified at our appearance. We were in a large, bare apartment, adorned with two allegorical prints of *Music* and *Painting,* and a copy of the Law against Public Drunkenness. On one side there was a bit of a bar, with some half a dozen bottles. Two laborers sat waiting supper, in attitudes of extreme weariness; a plain-looking lass bustled about with a sleepy child of two, and the landlady began to derange the pots upon the stove and set some beefsteak to grill.

"These gentlemen are pedlers?" she asked sharply; and that was all the conversation forthcoming. We began to think we might be pedlers, after all. I never knew a population with so narrow a range of conjecture as the innkeepers of *Pont-sur-Sambre.* But manners and bearing have not a wider currency than bank-notes. You have only to get far enough out of your beat, and all your accomplished airs will go for nothing. These *Hainaulters* could see no difference between us and the average pedler. Indeed, we had some grounds for reflection while the steak was getting ready, to see how perfectly they accepted us at their own valuation, and how our best politeness and best efforts at entertainment seemed to fit quite suitably with the character of packmen. At least it seemed a good account of the profession in *France,* that

even before such judges we could not beat them at our own weapons.

At last we were called to table. The two hinds (and one of them looked sadly worn and white in the face, as though sick with overwork and underfeeding) supped off a single plate of some sort of bread-berry, some potatoes in their jackets, a small cup of coffee sweetened with sugar candy, and one tumbler of swipes. The landlady, her son, and the lass aforesaid took the same. Our meal was quite a banquet by comparison. We had some beefsteak, not so tender as it might have been, some of the potatoes, some cheese, an extra glass of the swipes, and white sugar in our coffee.

You see what it is to be a gentleman,—I beg your pardon, what it is to be a pedler. It had not before occurred to me that a pedler was a great man in a laborer's ale-house; but now that I had to enact the part for the evening, I found that so it was. He has in his hedge quarters somewhat the same preeminency as the man who takes a private parlor in a hotel. The more you look into it the more infinite are the class distinctions among men; and possibly, by a happy dispensation, there is no one at all at the bottom of the scale; no one but can find some superiority over somebody else, to keep up his pride withal.

We were displeased enough with our fare. Particularly the *Cigarette;* for I tried to make believe that I was amused with the adventure, tough beefsteak and all. According to the *Lucretian* maxim, our steak should have been flavored by the look of the other people's bread-berry; but we did not find it so in practise. You may have a head knowledge that other people live more poorly than yourself, but it is not agreeable—I was going to say, it is against the etiquette of the universe—to sit at the same table and pick your own superior diet from among their crusts. I had not seen such a thing done since the greedy boy at school with his birthday cake. It was odious enough to witness, I could remember; and I had never thought to play the part myself. But there, again, you see what it is to be a pedler.

There is no doubt that the poorer classes in our country are much more charitably disposed than their superiors in wealth. And I fancy it must arise a great deal from the comparative indistinction of the easy and the not so easy in these ranks. A workman or a pedler can not shutter himself off from his less comfortable neighbors. If he treats himself to a luxury, he must do it in the face of a dozen who can not. And what should more directly lead to charitable thoughts? . . . Thus the poor man, camping out in life, sees it as it is, and knows that every mouthful he puts in his belly has been wrenched out of the fingers of the hungry.

But at a certain stage of prosperity, as in a balloon ascent, the fortunate person passes through a zone of clouds, and sublunary matters are thenceforward hidden from his view. He sees nothing but the heavenly bodies, all in admirable order and positively as good as new. He finds himself surrounded in the most touching manner by the attentions of *Providence,* and compares himself involuntarily with the lilies and the skylarks. He does not precisely sing, of course; but then he looks so unassuming in his open *Landau!* If all the world dined at one table, this philosophy would meet with some rude knocks.

PONT-SUR-SAMBRE

THE TRAVELING MERCHANT

LIKE the lackeys in *Molière's* farce, when the true noblemen broke in on their high life below stairs, we were destined to be confronted with a real pedler. To make the lesson still more poignant for fallen gentlemen like us, he was a pedler of infinitely more consideration than the sort of scurvy fellows we were taken for; like a lion among mice, or a ship of war bearing down upon two cockboats. Indeed, he did not deserve the name of pedler at all; he was a traveling merchant.

I suppose it was about half-past eight when this worthy, Monsieur *Hector Gilliard,* of *Maubeuge,* turned up at the ale-house door in a tilt cart drawn by a donkey, and cried cheerily on the inhabitants. He was a lean, nervous flibbertigibbet of a man, with something the look of an actor and something the look of a horse jockey. He had evidently prospered without any of the favors of education, for he adhered with stern simplicity to the masculine gender, and in the course of the evening passed off some fancy futures in a very florid style of architecture. With him came his wife, a comely young woman, with her hair tied in a yellow kerchief, and their son, a little fellow of four, in a blouse and military *képi.* It was notable that the child was many degrees better dressed than either of the parents. We were informed he was already at a boarding-school; but the holidays having just commenced, he was off to spend them with his parents on a cruise. An enchanting holiday occupation, was it not? to travel all day with father and mother in the tilt cart full of countless treasures; the green country rattling by on either side, and the children in all the villages contemplating him with envy and wonder. It is better fun, during

the holidays, to be the son of a traveling merchant, than son and heir to the greatest cotton spinner in creation. And as for being a reigning prince,—indeed, I never saw one if it was not Master *Gilliard!*

While M. *Hector* and the son of the house were putting up the donkey and getting all the valuables under lock and key, the landlady warmed up the remains of our beefsteak and fried the cold potatoes in slices, and Madame *Gilliard* set herself to waken the boy, who had come far that day, and was peevish and dazzled by the light. He was no sooner awake than he began to prepare himself for supper by eating galette, unripe pears, and cold potatoes, with, so far as I could judge, positive benefit to his appetite.

The landlady, fired with motherly emulation, awoke her own little girl, and the two children were confronted. Master *Gilliard* looked at her for a moment, very much as a dog looks at his own reflection in a mirror before he turns away. He was at that time absorbed in the galette. His mother seemed crestfallen that he should display so little inclination toward the other sex, and expressed her disappointment with some candor and a very proper reference to the influence of years.

Sure enough a time will come when he will pay more attention to the girls, and think a great deal less of his mother; let us hope she will like it as well as she seemed to fancy. But it is odd enough; the very women who profess most contempt for mankind as a sex seem to find even its ugliest particulars rather lively and high-minded in their own sons.

The little girl looked longer and with more interest, probably because she was in her own house, while he was a traveler and accustomed to strange sights. And, besides, there was no galette in the case with her.

All the time of supper there was nothing spoken of but my young lord. The two parents were both absurdly fond of their child. Monsieur kept insisting on his sagacity; how he knew all the children at school by name, and when this utterly failed on trial, how he was cautious and exact to a strange degree, and if asked anything, he

would sit and think—and think, and if he did not know it, "my faith, he wouldn't tell you at all—*ma foi, il ne vous le dira pas,*" which is certainly a very high degree of caution. At intervals, M. *Hector* would appeal to his wife, with his mouth full of beefsteak, as to the little fellow's age at such or such a time when he had said or done something memorable; and I noticed that Madame usually poohpoohed these inquiries. She herself was not boastful in her vein; but she never had her fill of caressing the child; and she seemed to take a gentle pleasure in recalling all that was fortunate in his little existence. No schoolboy could have talked more of the holidays which were just beginning and less of the black schooltime which must inevitably follow after. She showed, with a pride perhaps partly mercantile in origin, his pockets preposterously swollen with tops, and whistles, and string. When she called at a house in the way of business, it appeared he kept her company; and, whenever a sale was made, received a sou out of the profit. Indeed, they spoiled him vastly, these two good people. But they had an eye to his manners, for all that, and reproved him for some little faults in breeding which occurred from time to time during supper.

On the whole, I was not much hurt at being taken for a pedler. I might think that I ate with greater delicacy. or that my mistakes in French belonged to a different order; but it was plain that these distinctions would be thrown away upon the landlady and the two laborers. In all essential things we and the *Gilliards* cut very much the same figure in the ale-house kitchen. M. *Hector* was more at home, indeed, and took a higher tone with the world; but that was explicable on the ground of his driving a donkey-cart, while we poor bodies tramped afoot. I dare say the rest of the company thought us dying with envy, though in no ill sense, to be as far up in the profession as the new arrival.

And of one thing I am sure; that every one thawed and became more humanized and conversible as soon as these innocent people appeared upon the scene. I would not very readily trust the traveling merchant with any ex-

travagant sum of money, but I am sure his heart was in the right place. In this mixed world, if you can find one or two sensible places in a man; above all, if you should find a whole family living together on such pleasant terms, you may surely be satisfied, and take the rest for granted; or, what is a great deal better, boldly make up your mind that you can do perfectly well without the rest, and that ten thousand bad traits can not make a single good one any the less good.

It was getting late. M. *Hector* lit a stable lantern and went off to his cart for some arrangements, and my young gentleman proceeded to divest himself of the better part of his raiment and play gymnastics on his mother's lap, and thence on to the floor, with accompaniment of laughter.

"Are you going to sleep alone?" asked the servant lass.

"There's little fear of that," says Master *Gilliard*.

"You sleep alone at school," objected his mother. "Come, come, you must be a man."

But he protested that school was a different matter from the holidays; that there were dormitories at school, and silenced the discussion with kisses, his mother smiling, no one better pleased than she.

There certainly was, as he phrased it, very little fear that he should sleep alone, for there was but one bed for the trio. We, on our part, had firmly protested against one man's accommodation for two; and we had a double-bedded pen in the loft of the house, furnished, beside the beds, with exactly three hat pegs and one table. There was not so much as a glass of water. But the window would open, by good fortune.

Some time before I fell asleep the loft was full of the sound of mighty snoring; the *Gilliards*, and the laborers, and the people of the inn, all at it, I suppose, with one consent. The young moon outside shone very clearly over *Pont-sur-Sambre*, and down upon the ale-house where all we pedlers were abed.

ON THE SAMBRE CANALIZED

TO LANDRECIES

IN THE morning, when we came downstairs, the landlady pointed out to us two pails of water behind the street door. *"Voilà de l'eau pour vous débarbouiller,"* says she. And so there we made a shift to wash ourselves, while Madame *Gilliard* brushed the family boots on the outer doorstep, and M. *Hector,* whistling cheerily, arranged some small goods for the day's campaign in a portable chest of drawers, which formed a part of his baggage. Meanwhile the child was letting off *Waterloo* crackers all over the floor.

I wonder, by the by, what they call *Waterloo* crackers in *France;* perhaps *Austerlitz* crackers. There is a great deal in the point of view. Do you remember the *Frenchman* who, traveling by way of *Southampton,* was put down in *Waterloo* Station, and had to drive across *Waterloo* Bridge? He had a mind to go home again, it seems.

Pont itself is on the river, but whereas it is ten minutes' walk from *Quartes* by dry land, it is six weary kilometers by water. We left our bags at the inn and walked to our canoes through the wet orchards unencumbered. Some of the children were there to see us off, but we were no longer the mysterious beings of the night before. A departure is much less romantic than an unexplained arrival in the golden evening. Although we might be greatly taken at a ghost's first appearance, we should behold him vanish with comparative equanimity.

The good folks of the inn at *Pont,* when we called there for the bags, were overcome with marveling. At the sight of these two dainty little boats, with a fluttering Union Jack on each, and all the varnish shining from the sponge, they began to perceive that they had entertained angels unawares. The landlady stood upon the bridge, probably lamenting she had charged so little; the son ran

to and fro, and called out the neighbors to enjoy the sight; and we paddled away from quite a crowd of rapt observers. These gentlemen pedlers, indeed! Now you see their quality too late.

The whole day was showery, with occasional drenching plumps. We were soaked to the skin, then partially dried in the sun, then soaked once more. But there were some calm intervals, and one notably, when we were skirting the forest of *Mormal,* a sinister name to the ear, but a place most gratifying to sight and smell. It looked solemn along the riverside, drooping its boughs into the water, and piling them up aloft into a wall of leaves. What is a forest but a city of nature's own, full of hardy and innocuous living things, where there is nothing dead and nothing made with the hands, but the citizens themselves are the houses and public monuments? There is nothing so much alive and yet so quiet as a woodland; and a pair of people, swinging past in canoes, feel very small and bustling by comparison.

And, surely, of all smells in the world the smell of many trees is the sweetest and most fortifying. The sea has a rude pistoling sort of odor, that takes you in the nostrils like snuff, and carries with it a fine sentiment of open water and tall ships; but the smell of a forest, which comes nearest to this in tonic quality, surpasses it by many degrees in the quality of softness. Again, the smell of the sea has little variety, but the smell of a forest is infinitely changeful; it varies with the hour of the day, not in strength merely, but in character; and the different sorts of trees, as you go from one zone of the wood to another, seem to live among different kinds of atmosphere. Usually the resin of the fir predominates. But some woods are more coquettish in their habits; and the breath of the forest *Mormal,* as it came aboard upon us that showery afternoon, was perfumed with nothing less delicate than sweetbrier.

I wish our way had always lain among woods. Trees are the most civil society. An old oak that has been growing where he stands since before the Reformation, taller than many spires, more stately than the greater

part of mountains, and yet a living thing, liable to sicknesses and death, like you and me: is not that in itself a speaking lesson in history? But acres on acres full of such patriarchs contiguously rooted, their green tops billowing in the wind, their stalwart younglings pushing up about their knees; a whole forest, healthy and beautiful, giving color to the light, giving perfume to the air; what is this but the most imposing piece in nature's repertory? *Heine* wished to lie like *Merlin* under the oaks of *Broceliande*. I should not be satisfied with one tree; but if the wood grew together like a banyan grove, I would be buried under the tap-root of the whole; my parts should circulate from oak to oak; and my consciousness should be diffused abroad in all the forest, and give a common heart to that assembly of green spires, so that it, also, might rejoice in its own loveliness and dignity. I think I feel a thousand squirrels leaping from bough to bough in my vast mausoleum; and the birds and the winds merrily coursing over its uneven, leafy surface.

Alas! the forest of *Mormal* is only a little bit of a wood, and it was but for a little way that we skirted by its boundaries. And the rest of the time the rain kept coming in squirts and the wind in squalls, until one's heart grew weary of such fitful, scolding weather. It was odd how the showers began when we had to carry the boats over a lock and must expose our legs. They always did. This is a sort of thing that readily begets a personal feeling against nature. There seems no reason why the shower should not come five minutes before or five minutes after, unless you suppose an intention to affront you. The *Cigarette* had a mackintosh which put him more or less above these contrarieties. But I had to bear the brunt uncovered. I began to remember that nature was a woman. My companion, in a rosier temper, listened with great satisfaction to my jeremiads, and ironically concurred. He instanced, as a cognate matter, the action of the tides, "which," said he, "was altogether designed for the confusion of canoeists, except in so far as it was calculated to minister to a barren vanity on the part of the moon."

At the last lock, some little way out of *Landrecies,* I refused to go any farther; and sat in a drift of rain by the side of the bank, to have a reviving pipe. A vivacious old man, whom I took to have been the devil, drew near, and questioned me about our journey. In the fulness of my heart I laid bare our plans before him. He said it was the silliest enterprise that ever he heard of. Why, did I not know, he asked me, that it was nothing but locks, locks, locks, the whole way? not to mention that, at this season of the year, we would find the *Oise* quite dry? "Get into a train, my little young man," said he, "and go you away home to your parents." I was so astounded at the man's malice that I could only stare at him in silence. A tree would never have spoken to me like this. At last I got out with some words. We had come from *Antwerp* already, I told him, which was a good long way; and we should do the rest in spite of him. Yes, I said, if there were no other reason, I would do it now, just because he had dared to say we could not. The pleasant old gentleman looked at me sneeringly, made an allusion to my canoe, and marched off, wagging his head.

I was still inwardly fuming when up came a pair of young fellows, who imagined I was the *Cigarette's* servant, on a comparison, I suppose, of my bare jersey with the other's mackintosh, and asked me many questions about my place and my master's character. I said he was a good enough fellow, but had this absurd voyage on the head. "Oh, no, no," said one, "you must not say that; it is not absurd; it is very courageous of him." I believe these were a couple of angels sent to give me heart again. It was truly fortifying to reproduce all the old man's insinuations, as if they were original to me in my character of a malcontent footman, and have them brushed away like so many flies by these admirable young men.

When I recounted this affair to the *Cigarette,* "They must have a curious idea of how English servants behave," says he, dryly, "for you treated me like a brute beast at the lock."

I was a good deal mortified; but my temper had suffered, it is a fact.

ON THE SAMBRE CANALIZED

AT LANDRECIES

AT LANDRECIES the rain still fell and the wind still blew; but we found a double-bedded room with plenty of furniture, real water-jugs with real water in them, and dinner, a real dinner, not innocent of real wine. After having been a pedler for one night, and a butt for the elements during the whole of the next day, these comfortable circumstances fell on my heart like sunshine. There was an English fruiterer at dinner, traveling with a Belgian fruiterer; in the evening at the *café* we watched our compatriot drop a good deal of money at corks, and I don't know why, but this pleased us.

It turned out that we were to see more of *Landrecies* than we expected; for the weather next day was simply bedlamite. It is not the place one would have chosen for a day's rest, for it consists almost entirely of fortifications. Within the ramparts, a few blocks of houses, a long row of barracks, and a church figure, with what countenance they may, as the town. There seems to be no trade, and a shopkeeper from whom I bought a sixpenny flint and steel was so much affected that he filled my pockets with spare flints into the bargain. The only public buildings that had any interest for us were the hotel and the *café*. But we visited the church. There lies Marshal *Clarke*. But as neither of us had ever heard of that military hero, we bore the associations of the spot with fortitude.

In all garrison towns, guard-calls, and reveilles, and such like, make a fine, romantic interlude in civic business. Bugles, and drums, and fifes are of themselves most excellent things in nature, and when they carry the mind to marching armies and the picturesque vicissitudes of war they stir up something proud in the heart. But in a shadow of a town like *Landrecies,* with little else moving,

these points of war made a proportionate commotion. Indeed, they were the only things to remember. It was just the place to hear the round going by at night in the darkness, with the solid tramp of men marching, and the startling reverberations of the drum. It reminded you that even this place was a point in the great warfaring system of *Europe,* and might on some future day be ringed about with cannon smoke and thunder, and make itself a name among strong towns.

The drum, at any rate, from its martial voice and notable physiological effect, nay, even from its cumbrous and comical shape, stands alone among the instruments of noise. And if it be true, as I have heard it said, that drums are covered with asses' skin, what a picturesque irony is there in that! As if this long-suffering animal's hide had not been sufficiently belabored during life, now by Lyonnese costermongers, now by presumptuous Hebrew prophets, it must be stripped from his poor hinder quarters after death, stretched on a drum, and beaten night after night round the streets of every garrison town in *Europe.* And up the heights of *Alma* and *Spicheren,* and wherever death has his red flag aflying, and sounds his own potent tuck upon the cannons, there also must the drummer boy, hurrying with white face over fallen comrades, batter and bemaul this slip of skin from the loins of peaceable donkeys.

Generally a man is never more uselessly employed than when he is at this trick of bastinadoing asses' hide. We know what effect it has in life, and how your dull ass will not mend his pace with beating. But in this state of mummy and melancholy survival of itself, when the hollow skin reverberates to the drummer's wrist, and each dub-a-dub goes direct to a man's heart, and puts madness there, and that disposition of the pulses which we, in our big way of talking, nickname Heroism,—is there not something in the nature of a revenge upon the donkey's persecutors? Of old, he might say, you drubbed me up hill and down dale and I must endure; but now that I am dead those dull thwacks that were scarcely audible in country lanes have become stirring music in front of the

brigade, and for every blow that you lay on my old great-coat, you will see a comrade stumble and fall.

Not long after the drums had passed the *café,* the *Cigarette* and the *Arethusa* began to grow sleepy, and set out for the hotel, which was only a door or two away. But although we had been somewhat indifferent to *Landrecies, Landrecies* had not been indifferent to us. All day, we learned, people had been running out between the squalls to visit our two boats. Hundreds of persons, so said report, although it fitted ill with our idea of the town, —hundreds of persons had inspected them where they lay in a coal-shed. We were becoming lions in *Landrecies,* who had been only pedlers the night before in *Pont.*

And now, when we left the *café,* we were pursued and overtaken at the hotel door by no less a person than the *Juge de Paix;* a functionary, as far as I can make out, of the character of a Scotch *Sheriff Substitute.* He gave us his card and invited us to sup with him on the spot, very neatly, very gracefully, as *Frenchmen* can do these things. It was for the credit of *Landrecies,* said he; and although we knew very well how little credit we could do the place, we must have been churlish fellows to refuse an invitation so politely introduced.

The house of the judge was close by; it was a well-appointed bachelor's establishment, with a curious collection of old brass warming-pans upon the walls. Some of these were most elaborately carved. It seemed a picturesque idea for a collector. You could not help thinking how many nightcaps had wagged over these warming-pans in past generations; what jests may have been made and kisses taken while they were in service; and how often they had been uselessly paraded in the bed of death. If they could only speak, at what absurd, indecorous, and tragical scenes had they not been present?

The wine was excellent. When we made the judge our compliments upon a bottle, "I do not give it you as my worst," said he. I wonder when *Englishmen* will learn these hospitable graces. They are worth learning; they set off life and make ordinary moments ornamental.

There were two other *Landrecienses* present. One was

the collector of something or other, I forget what; the other, we were told, was the principal notary of the place. So it happened that we all five more or less followed the law. At this rate, the talk was pretty certain to become technical. The *Cigarette* expounded the poor laws very magisterially. And a little later I found myself laying down the Scotch law of illegitimacy, of which I am glad to say I know nothing. The collector and the notary, who were both married men, accused the judge, who was a bachelor, of having started the subject. He deprecated the charge, with a conscious, pleased air, just like all the men I have ever seen, be they French or English. How strange that we should all, in our unguarded moments, rather like to be thought a bit of a rogue with the women!

As the evening went on the wine grew more to my taste; the spirits proved better than the wine; the company was genial. This was the highest water-mark of popular favor on the whole cruise. After all, being in a judge's house, was there not something semiofficial in the tribute? And so, remembering what a great country *France* is, we did full justice to our entertainment. *Landrecies* had been a long while asleep before we returned to the hotel; and the sentries on the ramparts were already looking for daybreak.

SAMBRE AND OISE CANAL

CANAL-BOATS

NEXT day we made a late start in the rain. The judge politely escorted us to the end of the lock under an umbrella. We had now brought ourselves to a pitch of humility, in the matter of weather, not often attained except in the Scotch *Highlands*. A rag of blue sky or a glimpse of sunshine set our hearts singing; and when the rain was not heavy we counted the day almost fair.

Long lines of barges lay one after another along the canal, many of them looking mighty spruce and shipshape in their jerkin of *Archangel* tar picked out with white and green. Some carried gay iron railings and quite a parterre of flower-pots. Children played on the decks, as heedless of the rain as if they had been brought up on *Loch Caron* side; men fished over the gunwale, some of them under umbrellas; women did their washing; and every barge boasted its mongrel cur by way of watch-dog. Each one barked furiously at the canoes, running alongside until he had got to the end of his own ship, and so passing on the word to the dog aboard the next. We must have seen something like a hundred of these embarkations in the course of that day's paddle, ranged one after another like the houses in a street; and from not one of them were we disappointed of this accompaniment. It was like visiting a menagerie, the *Cigarette* remarked.

These little cities by the canal side had a very odd effect upon the mind. They seemed, with their flower-pots and smoking chimneys, their washings and dinners, a rooted piece of nature in the scene; and yet if only the canal below were to open, one junk after another would hoist sail or harness horses and swim away into all parts of *France;* and the impromptu hamlet would separate, house

by house, to the four winds. The children who played together to-day by the *Sambre* and *Oise* Canal, each at his own father's threshold, when and where might they next meet?

For some time past the subject of barges had occupied a great deal of our talk, and we had projected an old age on the canals of *Europe*. It was to be the most leisurely of progresses, now on a swift river at the tail of a steamboat, now waiting horses for days together on some inconsiderable junction. We should be seen pottering on deck in all the dignity of years, our white beards falling into our laps. We were ever to be busied among paint-pots, so that there should be no white fresher and no green more emerald than ours, in all the navy of the canals. There should be books in the cabin, and tobacco jars, and some old *Burgundy* as red as a *November* sunset and as odorous as a violet in *April*. There should be a flageolet whence the *Cigarette*, with cunning touch, should draw melting music under the stars; or perhaps, laying that aside, upraise his voice—somewhat thinner than of yore, and with here and there a quaver, or call it a natural grace note—in rich and solemn psalmody.

All this simmering in my mind set me wishing to go aboard one of these ideal houses of lounging. I had plenty to choose from, as I coasted one after another and the dogs bayed at me for a vagrant. At last I saw a nice old man and his wife looking at me with some interest, so I gave them good day and pulled up alongside. I began with a remark upon their dog, which had somewhat the look of a pointer; thence I slid into a compliment on Madame's flowers, and thence into a word in praise of their way of life.

If you ventured on such an experiment in *England* you would get a slap in the face at once. The life would be shown to be a vile one, not without a side shot at your better fortune. Now, what I like so much in *France* is the clear, unflinching recognition by everybody of his own luck. They all know on which side their bread is buttered, and take a pleasure in showing it to others, which is surely the better part of religion. And they scorn

to make a poor mouth over their poverty, which I take to be the better part of manliness. I have heard a woman in quite a better position at home, with a good bit of money in hand, refer to her own child with a horrid whine as "a poor man's child." I would not say such a thing to the Duke of *Westminster*. And the *French* are full of this spirit of independence. Perhaps it is the result of republican institutions, as they call them. Much more likely it is because there are so few people really poor that the whiners are not enough to keep each other in countenance.

The people on the barge were delighted to hear that I admired their state. They understood perfectly well, they told me, how Monsieur envied them. Without doubt Monsieur was rich, and in that case he might make a canal-boat as pretty as a villa—*joli comme un château.* And with that they invited me on board their own water villa. They apologized for their cabin; they had not been rich enough to make it as it ought to be.

"The fire should have been here, at this side," explained the husband. "Then one might have a writing-table in the middle—books—and" (comprehensively) "all. It would be quite coquettish—*ça serait tout-à-fait coquet.*" And he looked about him as though the improvements were already made. It was plainly not the first time that he had thus beautified his cabin in imagination; and when next he makes a hit, I should expect to see the writing-table in the middle.

Madame had three birds in a cage. They were no great thing, she explained. Fine birds were so dear. They had sought to get a *Hollandais* last winter in *Rouen* (*Rouen,* thought I; and is this whole mansion, with its dogs, and birds, and smoking chimneys, so far a traveler as that, and as homely an object among the cliffs and orchards of the *Seine* as on the green plains of *Sambre?*)—they had sought to get a *Hollandais* last winter in *Rouen;* but these cost fifteen francs apiece—picture it—fifteen francs!

"*Pour un tout petit oiseau*—For quite a little bird," added the husband.

As I continued to admire, the apologetics died away, and the good people began to brag of their barge and

their happy condition in life, as if they had been Emperor and Empress of the *Indies*. It was, in the Scotch phrase, a good hearing, and put me in good humor with the world. If people knew what an inspiriting thing it is to hear a man boasting, so long as he boasts of what he really has, I believe they would do it more freely and with a better grace.

They began to ask about our voyage. You should have seen how they sympathized. They seemed half ready to give up their barge and follow us. But these *canaletti* are only gipsies semidomesticated. The semidomestication came out in rather a pretty form. Suddenly Madame's brow darkened. *"Cependant,"* she began, and then stopped; and then began again by asking me if I were single.

"Yes," said I.

"And your friend who went by just now?"

He also was unmarried.

Oh, then, all was well. She could not have wives left alone at home; but since there were no wives in the question, we were doing the best we could.

"To see about one in the world," said the husband, *"il n'y a que ça*—there is nothing else worth while. A man, look you, who sticks in his own village like a bear," he went on, "very well, he sees nothing. And then death is the end of all. And he has seen nothing."

Madame reminded her husband of an *Englishman* who had come up this canal in a steamer.

"Perhaps Mr. *Moens* in the *Ytene*," I suggested.

"That's it," assented the husband. "He had his wife and family with him, and servants. He came ashore at all the locks and asked the name of the villages, whether from boatmen or lock-keepers; and then he wrote, wrote them down. Oh, he wrote enormously! I suppose it was a wager."

A wager was a common enough explanation for our own exploits, but it seemed an original reason for taking notes.

THE OISE IN FLOOD

BEFORE nine next morning the two canoes were installed on a light country cart at *Etreux;* and we were soon following them along the side of a pleasant valley full of hop gardens and poplars. Agreeable villages lay here and there on the slope of the hill: notably, *Tupigny,* with the hop-poles hanging their garlands in the very street, and the houses clustered with grapes. There was a faint enthusiasm on our passage; weavers put their heads to the windows; children cried out in ecstasy at sight of the two "boaties"—*barquettes;* and bloused pedestrians, who were acquainted with our charioteer, jested with him on the nature of his freight.

We had a shower or two, but light and flying. The air was clean and sweet among all these green fields and green things growing. There was not a touch of autumn in the weather. And when, at *Vadencourt,* we launched from a little lawn opposite a mill, the sun broke forth and set all the leaves shining in the valley of the *Oise.*

The river was swollen with the long rains. From *Vadencourt* all the way to *Origny* it ran with ever-quickening speed, taking fresh heart at each mile, and racing as though it already smelt the sea. The water was yellow and turbulent, swung with an angry eddy among half-submerged willows, and made an angry clatter along stony shores. The course kept turning and turning in a narrow and well-timbered valley. Now the river would approach the side, and run gliding along the chalky base of the hill, and show us a few open colza fields among the trees. Now it would skirt the garden walls of houses, where we might catch a glimpse through a doorway, and see a priest pacing in the checkered sunlight. Again, the foliage closed so thickly in front that there seemed to be no issue; only a thicket of willows overtopped by elms and poplars, under which the river ran flush and fleet, and

where a kingfisher flew past like a piece of the blue sky. On these different manifestations the sun poured its clear and catholic looks. The shadows lay as solid on the swift surface of the stream as on the stable meadows. The light sparkled golden in the dancing poplar leaves, and brought the hills into communion with our eyes. And all the while the river never stopped running or took breath; and the reeds along the whole valley stood shivering from top to toe.

There should be some myth (but if there is, I know it not) founded on the shivering of the reeds. There are not many things in nature more striking to man's eye. It is such an eloquent pantomime of terror; and to see such a number of terrified creatures taking sanctuary in every nook along the shore is enough to infect a silly human with alarm. Perhaps they are only acold, and no wonder, standing waist deep in the stream. Or, perhaps, they have never got accustomed to the speed and fury of the river's flux, or the miracle of its continuous body. *Pan* once played upon their forefathers; and so, by the hands of his river, he still plays upon these later generations down all the valley of the *Oise;* and plays the same air, both sweet and shrill, to tell us of the beauty and the terror of the world.

The canoe was like a leaf in the current. It took it up and shook it, and carried it masterfully away, like a Centaur carrying off a nymph. To keep some command on our direction required hard and diligent plying of the paddle. The river was in such a hurry for the sea! Every drop of water ran in a panic, like so many people in a frightened crowd. But what crowd was ever so numerous or so single-minded? All the objects of sight went by at a dance measure; the eyesight raced with the racing river; the exigencies of every moment kept the pegs screwed so tight that our being quivered like a well-tuned instrument, and the blood shook off its lethargy, and trotted through all the highways and byways of the veins and arteries, and in and out of the heart, as if circulation were but a holiday journey and not the daily moil of threescore years and ten. The reeds might nod their heads

in warning, and with tremulous gestures tell how the river was as cruel as it was strong and cold, and how death lurked in the eddy underneath the willows. But the reeds had to stand where they were; and those who stand still are always timid advisers. As for us, we could have shouted aloud. If this lively and beautiful river were, indeed, a thing of death's contrivance, the old ashen rogue had famously outwitted himself with us. I was living three to the minute. I was scoring points against him every stroke of my paddle, every turn of the stream. I have rarely had better profit of my life.

For I think we may look upon our little private war with death somewhat in this light. If a man knows he will sooner or later be robbed upon a journey, he will have a bottle of the best in every inn, and look upon all his extravagances as so much gained upon the thieves. And above all, where, instead of simply spending, he makes a profitable investment for some of his money, when it will be out of risk of loss. So every bit of brisk living, and above all when it is healthful, is just so much gained upon the wholesale filcher, death. We shall have the less in our pockets, the more in our stomachs, when he cries, Stand and deliver. A swift stream is a favorite artifice of his, and one that brings him in a comfortable thing per annum; but when he and I come to settle our accounts I shall whistle in his face for these hours upon the upper *Oise*.

Toward afternoon we got fairly drunken with the sunshine and the exhilaration of the pace. We could no longer contain ourselves and our content. The canoes were too small for us; we must be out and stretch ourselves on shore. And so in a green meadow we bestowed our limbs on the grass, and smoked deifying tobacco, and proclaimed the world excellent. It was the last good hour of the day, and I dwell upon it with extreme complacency.

On one side of the valley, high upon the chalky summit of the hill, a plowman with his team appeared and disappeared at regular intervals. At each revelation he stood still for a few seconds against the sky, for all the

world (as the *Cigarette* declared) like a toy *Burns* who had just plowed up the *Mountain Daisy*. He was the only living thing within view, unless we are to count the river.

On the other side of the valley a group of red roofs and a belfry showed among the foliage. Thence some inspired bell-ringer made the afternoon musical on a chime of bells. There was something very sweet and taking in the air he played, and we thought we had never heard bells speak so intelligibly or sing so melodiously as these. It must have been to some such measure that the spinners and the young maids sang, "Come away, Death," in the Shakespearian *Illyria*. There is so often a threatening note, something blatant and metallic, in the voice of bells, that I believe we have fully more pain than pleasure from hearing them; but these, as they sounded abroad, now high, now low, now with a plaintive cadence that caught the ear like the burden of a popular song, were always moderate and tunable, and seemed to fall in with the spirit of still, rustic places, like the noise of a waterfall or the babble of a rookery in spring. I could have asked the bell-ringer for his blessing, good, sedate old man, who swung the rope so gently to the time of his meditations. I could have blessed the priest or the heritors, or whoever may be concerned with such affairs in *France*, who had left these sweet old bells to gladden the afternoon, and not held meetings, and made collections, and had their names repeatedly printed in the local paper, to rig up a peal of brand-new, brazen *Birmingham*-hearted substitutes, who should bombard their sides to the provocation of a brand-new bell-ringer, and fill the echoes of the valley with terror and riot.

At last the bells ceased, and with their note the sun withdrew. The piece was at an end; shadow and silence possessed the valley of the *Oise*. We took to the paddle with glad hearts, like people who have sat out a noble performance and return to work. The river was more dangerous here; it ran swifter, the eddies were more sudden and violent. All the way down we had had our fill of difficulties. Sometimes it was a weir which could be

shot, sometimes one so shallow and full of stakes that we must withdraw the boats from the water and carry them round. But the chief sort of obstacle was a consequence of the late high winds. Every two or three hundred yards a tree had fallen across the river, and usually involved more than another in its fall. Often there was free water at the end, and we could steer round the leafy promontory and hear the water sucking and bubbling among the twigs. Often, again, when the tree reached from bank to bank, there was room, by lying close, to shoot through underneath, canoe and all. Sometimes it was necessary to get out upon the trunk itself and pull the boats across; and sometimes, where the stream was too impetuous for this, there was nothing for it but to land and "carry over." This made a fine series of accidents in the day's career, and kept us aware of ourselves.

Shortly after our reembarkation, while I was leading by a long way, and still full of a noble, exulting spirit in honor of the sun, the swift pace, and the church bells, the river made one of its leonine pounces round a corner, and I was aware of another fallen tree within a stone-cast. I had my backboard down in a trice, and aimed for a place where the trunk seemed high enough above the water, and the branches not too thick to let me slip below. When a man has just vowed eternal brotherhood with the universe he is not in a temper to take great determinations coolly, and this, which might have been a very important determination for me, had not been taken under a happy star. The tree caught me about the chest, and while I was yet struggling to make less of myself and get through, the river took the matter out of my hands and bereaved me of my boat. The *Arethusa* swung round broadside on, leaned over, ejected so much of me as still remained on board, and, thus disencumbered, whipped under the tree, righted, and went merrily away down stream.

I do not know how long it was before I scrambled on to the tree to which I was left clinging, but it was longer than I cared about. My thoughts were of a grave and almost somber character, but I still clung to my paddle.

The stream ran away with my heels as fast as I could pull up my shoulders, and I seemed, by the weight, to have all the water of the *Oise* in my trousers pockets. You can never know, till you try it, what a dead pull a river makes against a man. Death himself had me by the heels, for this was his last ambuscade, and he must now join personally in the fray. And still I held to my paddle. At last I dragged myself on to my stomach on the trunk, and lay there a breathless sop, with a mingled sense of humor and injustice. A poor figure I must have presented to *Burns* upon the hilltop with his team. But there was the paddle in my hand. On my tomb, if ever I have one, I mean to get these words inscribed: "He clung to his paddle."

The *Cigarette* had gone past awhile before; for, as I might have observed, if I had been a little less pleased with the universe at the moment, there was a clear way round the tree-top at the farther side. He had offered his services to haul me out, but, as I was then already on my elbows, I had declined, and sent him down stream after the truant *Arethusa*. The stream was too rapid for a man to mount with one canoe, let alone two, upon his hands. So I crawled along the trunk to shore, and proceeded down the meadows by the riverside. I was so cold that my heart was sore. I had now an idea of my own why the reeds so bitterly shivered. I could have given any of them a lesson. The *Cigarette* remarked, facetiously, that he thought I was "taking exercise" as I drew near, until he made out for certain that I was only twittering with cold. I had a rub-down with a towel, and donned a dry suit from the india-rubber bag. But I was not my own man again for the rest of the voyage. I had a queasy sense that I wore my last dry clothes upon my body. The struggle had tired me; and, perhaps, whether I knew it or not, I was a little dashed in spirit. The devouring element in the universe had leaped out against me, in this green valley quickened by a running stream. The bells were all very pretty in their way, but I had heard some of the hollow notes of *Pan's* music. Would the wicked river drag me down by the heels, indeed? and look so

beautiful all the time? Nature's good humor was only skin deep, after all.

There was still a long way to go by the winding course of the stream, and darkness had fallen, and a late bell was ringing in *Origny Sainte-Benoîte* when we arrived.

ORIGNY SAINTE-BENOÎTE

A BY-DAY

THE next day was *Sunday,* and the church bells had little rest; indeed, I do not think I remember anywhere else so great a choice of services as were here offered to the devout. And while the bells made merry in the sunshine, all the world with his dog was out shooting among the beets and colza.

In the morning a hawker and his wife went down the street at a foot-pace, singing to a very slow, lamentable music, *"O France, mes amours."* It brought everybody to the door; and when our landlady called in the man to buy the words, he had not a copy of them left. She was not the first nor the second who had been taken with the song. There is something very pathetic in the love of the French people, since the war, for dismal patriotic music-making. I have watched a forester from *Alsace* while some one was singing *"Les malheurs de la France,"* at a baptismal party in the neighborhood of *Fontainebleau.* He arose from the table and took his son aside, close by where I was standing. "Listen, listen," he said, bearing on the boy's shoulder, "and remember this, my son." A little after he went out into the garden suddenly, and I could hear him sobbing in the darkness.

The humiliation of their arms and the loss of *Alsace* and *Lorraine* made a sore pull on the endurance of this sensitive people; and their hearts are still hot, not so much against *Germany* as against the Empire. In what other country will you find a patriotic ditty bring all the world into the street? But affliction heightens love; and we shall never know we are *Englishmen* until we have lost *India.* Independent *America* is still the cross of my existence; I can not think of *Farmer George* without abhorrence; and I never feel more warmly to my own land than when

I see the stars and stripes, and remember what our empire might have been.

The hawker's little book, which I purchased, was a curious mixture. Side by side with the flippant, rowdy nonsense of the *Paris* music-halls there were many pastoral pieces, not without a touch of poetry, I thought, and instinct with the brave independence of the poorer class in *France*. There you might read how the wood-cutter gloried in his ax, and the gardener scorned to be ashamed of his spade. It was not very well written, this poetry of labor, but the pluck of the sentiment redeemed what was weak or wordy in the expression. The martial and the patriotic pieces, on the other hand, were tearful, womanish productions one and all. The poet had passed under the *Caudine Forks;* he sang for an army visiting the tomb of its old renown, with arms reversed; and sang not of victory, but of death. There was a number in the hawker's collection called *Conscrits Français,* which may rank among the most dissuasive war lyrics on record. It would not be possible to fight at all in such a spirit. The bravest conscript would turn pale if such a ditty were struck up beside him on the morning of battle; and whole regiments would pile their arms to its tune.

If *Fletcher* of *Saltoun* is in the right about the influence of national songs, you would say *France* was come to a poor pass. But the thing will work its own cure, and a sound-hearted and courageous people weary at length of sniveling over their disasters. Already *Paul Déroulède* has written some manly military verses. There is not much of the trumpet note in them, perhaps, to stir a man's heart in his bosom; they lack the lyrical elation, and move slowly; but they are written in a grave, honorable, stoical spirit, which should carry soldiers far in a good cause. One feels as if one would like to trust *Déroulède* with something. It will be happy if he can so far inoculate his fellow countrymen that they may be trusted with their own future. And, in the mean time, here is an antidote to "French Conscripts" and much other doleful versification.

We had left the boats overnight in the custody of one

whom we shall call *Carnival.* I did not properly catch his name, and perhaps that was not unfortunate for him, as I am not in a position to hand him down with honor to posterity. To this person's premises we strolled in the course of the day, and found quite a little deputation inspecting the canoes. There was a stout gentleman with a knowledge of the river, which he seemed eager to impart. There was a very elegant young gentleman in a black coat, with a smattering of English, who led the talk at once to the *Oxford* and *Cambridge* boat race. And then there were three handsome girls from fifteen to twenty; and an old gentleman in a blouse, with no teeth to speak of, and a strong country accent. Quite the pick of *Origny,* I should suppose.

The *Cigarette* had some mysteries to perform with his rigging in the coach-house; so I was left to do the parade single-handed. I found myself very much of a hero whether I would or not. The girls were full of little shudderings over the dangers of our journey. And I thought it would be ungallant not to take my cue from the ladies.

My mishap of yesterday, told in an off-hand way, produced a deep sensation. It was *Othello* over again, with no less than three *Desdemonas* and a sprinkling of sympathetic senators in the background. Never were the canoes more flattered, or flattered more adroitly.

"It is like a violin," cried one of the girls in an ecstasy.

"I thank you for the word, mademoiselle," said I. "All the more since there are people who call out to me that it is like a coffin."

"Oh! but it is really like a violin. It is finished like a violin," she went on.

"And polished like a violin," added a senator.

"One has only to stretch the cords," concluded another, "and then tum-tumty-tum"; he imitated the result with spirit.

Was not this a graceful little ovation? Where this people finds the secret of its pretty speeches I can not imagine, unless the secret should be no other than a sincere desire to please. But then no disgrace is attached in

France to saying a thing neatly; whereas in *England,* to talk like a book is to give in one's resignation to society.

The old gentleman in the blouse stole into the coach-house, and somewhat irrelevantly informed the *Cigarette* that he was the father of the three girls and four more; quite an exploit for a *Frenchman.*

"You are very fortunate," answered the *Cigarette* politely.

And the old gentleman, having apparently gained his point, stole away again.

We all got very friendly together. The girls proposed to start with us on the morrow, if you please. And, jesting apart, every one was anxious to know the hour of our departure. Now, when you are going to crawl into your canoe from a bad launch, a crowd, however friendly, is undesirable, and so we told them not before twelve, and mentally determined to be off by ten at latest.

Toward evening we went abroad again to post some letters. It was cool and pleasant; the long village was quite empty, except for one or two urchins who followed us as they might have followed a menagerie; the hills and the tree-tops looked in from all sides through the clear air, and the bells were chiming for yet another service.

Suddenly we sighted the three girls, standing, with a fourth sister, in front of a shop on the wide selvage of the roadway. We had been very merry with them a little while ago, to be sure. But what was the etiquette of *Origny?* Had it been a country road, of course we should have spoken to them; but here, under the eyes of all the gossips, ought we to do even as much as bow? I consulted the *Cigarette.*

"Look," said he.

I looked. There were the four girls on the same spot; but now four backs were turned to us, very upright and conscious. Corporal Modesty had given the word of command, and the well-disciplined picket had gone right-about-face like a single person. They maintained this formation all the while we were in sight; but we heard them tittering among themselves, and the girl whom we had not met laughed with open mouth, and even looked

over her shoulder at the enemy. I wonder was it altogether modesty after all, or in part a sort of country provocation?

As we were returning to the inn we beheld something floating in the ample field of golden evening sky, above the chalk cliffs and the trees that grow along their summit. It was too high up, too large, and too steady for a kite; and, as it was dark, it could not be a star. For, although a star were as black as ink and as rugged as a walnut, so amply does the sun bathe heaven with radiance that it would sparkle like a point of light for us. The village was dotted with people with their heads in air; and the children were in a bustle all along the street and far up the straight road that climbs the hill, where we could still see them running in loose knots. It was a balloon, we learned, which had left *Saint Quentin* at half-past five that evening. Mighty composedly the majority of the grown people took it. But we were English, and were soon running up the hill with the best. Being travelers ourselves in a small way, we would fain have seen these other travelers alight.

The spectacle was over by the time we gained the top of the hill. All the gold had withered out of the sky, and the balloon had disappeared. Whither? I ask myself; caught up into the seventh heaven? or come safely to land somewhere in that blue, uneven distance, into which the roadway dipped and melted before our eyes? Probably the aeronauts were already warming themselves at a farm chimney, for they say it is cold in these unhomely regions of the air. The night fell swiftly. Roadside trees and disappointed sightseers, returning through the meadows, stood out in black against a margin of low, red sunset. It was cheerfuller to face the other way, and so down the hill we went, with a full moon, the color of a melon, swinging high above the wooded valley, and the white cliffs behind us faintly reddened by the fire of the chalk-kilns.

The lamps were lighted, and the salads were being made in *Origny Sainte-Benoîte* by the river.

ORIGNY SAINTE-BENOÎTE

THE COMPANY AT TABLE

ALTHOUGH we came late for dinner, the company at table treated us to sparkling wine. "That is how we are in *France,*" said one. "Those who sit down with us are our friends." And the rest applauded.

They were three altogether, and an odd trio to pass the *Sunday* with.

Two of them were guests like ourselves, both men of the north. One ruddy, and of a full habit of body, with copious black hair and beard, the intrepid hunter of *France,* who thought nothing so small, not even a lark or a minnow, but he might vindicate his prowess by its capture. For such a great, healthy man, his hair flourishing like *Samson's,* his arteries running buckets of red blood, to boast of these infinitesimal exploits, produced a feeling of disproportion in the world, as when a steam-hammer is set to cracking nuts. The other was a quiet, subdued person, blond, and lymphatic, and sad, with something the look of a Dane: *"Tristes têtes de Danios!"* as *Gaston Lafenestre* used to say.

I must not let that name go by without a word for the best of all good fellows, now gone down into the dust. We shall never again see *Gaston* in his forest costume,—he was *Gaston* with all the world, in affection, not in disrespect,—nor hear him wake the echoes of *Fontainebleau* with the woodland horn. Never again shall his kind smile put peace among all races of artistic men, and make the *Englishman* at home in *France.* Never more shall the sheep, who were not more innocent at heart than he, sit all unconsciously for his industrious pencil. He died too early, at the very moment when he was beginning to put forth fresh sprouts and blossom into something worthy of himself; and yet none who knew him will think he lived

in vain. I never knew a man so little, for whom yet I had so much affection; and I find it a good test of others, how much they had learned to understand and value him. His was, indeed, a good influence in life while he was still among us; he had a fresh laugh; it did you good to see him; and, however sad he may have been at heart, he always bore a bold and cheerful countenance and took fortune's worst as it were the showers of spring. But now his mother sits alone by the side of *Fontainebleau* woods, where he gathered mushrooms in his hardy and penurious youth.

Many of his pictures found their way across the Channel; besides those which were stolen, when a dastardly *Yankee* left him alone in *London* with two English pence, and, perhaps, twice as many words of English. If any one who reads these lines should have a scene of sheep, in the manner of *Jaques,* with this fine creature's signature, let him tell himself that one of the kindest and bravest of men has lent a hand to decorate his lodging. There may be better pictures in the *National Gallery;* but not a painter among the generations had a better heart. Precious in the sight of the *Lord* of humanity, the *Psalms* tell us, is the death of his saints. It had need to be precious; for it is very costly, when, by a stroke, a mother is left desolate, and the peace-maker and *peace-looker* of a whole society is laid in the ground with *Cæsar* and the *Twelve Apostles.*

There is something lacking among the oaks of *Fontainebleau;* and when the dessert comes in at *Barbizon,* people look to the door for a figure that is gone.

The third of our companions at *Origny* was no less a person than the landlady's husband; not properly the landlord, since he worked himself in a factory during the day, and came to his own house at evening as a guest; a man worn to skin and bone by perpetual excitement, with baldish head, sharp features, and swift, shining eyes. On *Saturday,* describing some paltry adventure at a duck-hunt, he broke a plate into a score of fragments. Whenever he made a remark he would look all round the table with his chin raised and a spark of green light in either

eye, seeking approval. His wife appeared now and again in the doorway of the room, where she was superintending dinner, with a "*Henri,* you forget yourself," or a "*Henri,* you can surely talk without making such a noise." Indeed, that was what the honest fellow could not do. On the most trifling matter his eyes kindled, his fist visited the table, and his voice rolled abroad in changeful thunder. I never saw such a petard of a man; I think the devil was in him. He had two favorite expressions, "It is logical," or illogical, as the case might be; and this other thrown out with a certain bravado, as a man might unfurl a banner, at the beginning of many a long and sonorous story: "I am a proletarian, you see." Indeed, we saw it very well. *God* forbid that ever I should find him handling a gun in *Paris* streets. That will not be a good moment for the general public.

I thought his two phrases very much represented the good and evil of his class, and, to some extent, of his country. It is a strong thing to say what one is, and not be ashamed of it; even although it be in doubtful taste to repeat the statement too often in one evening. I should not admire it in a duke, of course; but as times go the trait is honorable in a workman. On the other hand, it is not at all a strong thing to put one's reliance upon logic; and our own logic particularly, for it is generally wrong. We never know where we are to end if once we begin following words or doctors. There is an upright stock in a man's own heart that is trustier than any syllogism; and the eyes, and the sympathies, and appetites know a thing or two that have never yet been stated in controversy. Reasons are as plentiful as blackberries; and, like fisticuffs, they serve impartially with all sides. Doctrines do not stand or fall by their proofs, and are only logical in so far as they are cleverly put. An able controversialist no more than an able general demonstrates the justice of his cause. But *France* is all gone wandering after one or two big words; it will take some time before they can be satisfied that they are no more than words, however big; and, when once that is done, they will perhaps find logic less diverting.

The conversation opened with details of the day's shooting. When all the sportsmen of a village shoot over the village territory *pro indiviso,* it is plain that many questions of etiquette and priority must arise.

"Here now," cried the landlord, brandishing a plate, "here is a field of beet-root. Well. Here am I, then. I advance, do I not? *Eh bien! sacristi";* and the statement, waxing louder, rolls off into a reverberation of oaths, the speaker glaring about for sympathy, and everybody nodding his head to him in the name of peace.

The ruddy *Northman* told some tales of his own prowess in keeping order: notably one of a Marquis.

"Marquis," said I, "if you take another step I fire upon you. You have committed a dirtiness, Marquis."

Whereupon, it appeared, the Marquis touched his cap and withdrew.

The landlord applauded noisily. "It was well done," he said. "He did all that he could. He admitted he was wrong." And then oath upon oath. He was no marquis lover either, but he had a sense of justice in him, this proletarian host of ours.

From the matter of hunting, the talk veered into a general comparison of *Paris* and the country. The proletarian beat the table like a drum in praise of *Paris.* "What is *Paris? Paris* is the cream of *France.* There are no Parisians; it is you, and I, and everybody who are Parisians. A man has eighty chances per cent to get on in the world in *Paris."* And he drew a vivid sketch of the workman in a den no bigger than a dog-hutch, making articles that were to go all over the world. *"Eh bien, quoi, c'est magnifique, ça!"* cried he.

The sad *Northman* interfered in praise of a peasant's life; he thought *Paris* bad for men and women. Centralization, said he—

But the landlord was at his throat in a moment. It was all logical, he showed him, and all magnificent. "What a spectacle! What a glance for an eye!" And the dishes reeled upon the table under a cannonade of blows.

Seeking to make peace, I threw in a word in praise of the liberty of opinion in *France.* I could hardly have shot

more amiss. There was an instant silence and a great wagging of significant heads. They did not fancy the subject, it was plain, but they gave me to understand that the sad *Northman* was a martyr on account of his views. "Ask him a bit," said they. "Just ask him."

"Yes, sir," said he in his quiet way, answering me, although I had not spoken, "I am afraid there is less liberty of opinion in *France* than you may imagine." And with that he dropped his eyes and seemed to consider the subject at an end.

Our curiosity was mightily excited at this. How, or why, or when was this lymphatic bagman martyred? We concluded at once it was on some religious question, and brushed up our memories of the *Inquisition,* which were principally drawn from *Poe's* horrid story, and the sermon in *Tristram Shandy,* I believe.

On the morrow we had an opportunity of going further into the question; for when we rose very early to avoid a sympathizing deputation at our departure, we found the hero up before us. He was breaking his fast on white wine and raw onions, in order to keep up the character of martyr, I conclude. We had a long conversation, and made out what we wanted in spite of his reserve. But here was a truly curious circumstance. It seems possible for two *Scotchmen* and a *Frenchman* to discuss during a long half-hour, and each nationality have a different idea in view throughout. It was not till the very end that we discovered his heresy had been political, or that he suspected our mistake. The terms and spirit in which he spoke of his political beliefs were, in our eyes, suited to religious beliefs. And *vice versa.*

Nothing could be more characteristic of the two countries. Politics are the religion of *France;* as *Nanty Ewart* would have said, "A d——d bad religion," while we, at home, keep most of our bitterness for all differences about a hymn-book or a Hebrew word which, perhaps, neither of the parties can translate. And perhaps the misconception is typical of many others that may never be cleared up; not only between people of different race, but between those of different sex.

As for our friend's martyrdom, he was a Communist, or perhaps only a Communard, which is a very different thing, and had lost one or more situations in consequence. I think he had also been rejected in marriage; but perhaps he had a sentimental way of considering business which deceived me. He was a mild, gentle creature, anyway, and I hope he has got a better situation and married a more suitable wife since then.

DOWN THE OISE

TO MOY

CARNIVAL notoriously cheated us at first. Finding us easy in our ways, he regretted having let us off so cheaply, and, taking me aside, told me a cock-and-bull story, with the moral of another five francs for the narrator. The thing was palpably absurd; but I paid up, and at once dropped all friendliness of manner and kept him in his place as an inferior, with freezing British dignity. He saw in a moment that he had gone too far and killed a willing horse; his face fell; I am sure he would have refunded if he could only have thought of a decent pretext. He wished me to drink with him, but I would none of his drinks. He grew pathetically tender in his professions, but I walked beside him in silence or answered him in stately courtesies, and, when we got to the landing-place, passed the word in English slang to the *Cigarette.*

In spite of the false scent we had thrown out the day before, there must have been fifty people about the bridge. We were as pleasant as we could be with all but *Carnival.* We said good-by, shaking hands with the old gentleman who knew the river and the young gentleman who had a smattering of English, but never a word for *Carnival.* Poor *Carnival,* here was a humiliation. He who had been so much identified with the canoes, who had given orders in our name, who had shown off the boats, and even the boatmen like a private exhibition of his own, to be now so publicly shamed by the lions of his caravan! I never saw anybody look more crestfallen than he. He hung in the background, coming timidly forward ever and again as he thought he saw some symptom of a relenting humor, and falling hurriedly back when he encountered a cold stare. Let us hope it will be a lesson to him.

I would not have mentioned *Carnival's* peccadillo had not the thing been so uncommon in *France.* This, for instance, was the only case of dishonesty or even sharp practise in our whole voyage. We talk very much about our honesty in *England.* It is a good rule to be on your guard wherever you hear great professions about a very little piece of virtue. If the English could only hear how they are spoken of abroad, they might confine themselves for a while to remedying the fact, and perhaps even when that was done, give us fewer of their airs.

The young ladies, the graces of *Origny,* were not present at our start, but when we got round to the second bridge, behold, it was black with sightseers! We were loudly cheered, and for a good way below young lads and lasses ran along the bank, still cheering. What with current and paddling, we were flashing along like swallows. It was no joke to keep up with us upon the woody shore. But the girls picked up their skirts, as if they were sure they had good ankles, and followed until their breath was out. The last to weary were the three graces and a couple of companions; and just as they, too, had had enough, the foremost of the three leaped upon a tree stump and kissed her hand to the canoeists. Not *Diana* herself, although this was more of a *Venus,* after all, could have done a graceful thing more gracefully. "Come back again!" she cried; and all the others echoed her; and the hills about *Origny* repeated the words, "Come back." But the river had us round an angle in a twinkling, and we were alone with the green trees and running water.

Come back? There is no coming back, young ladies, on the impetuous stream of life.

> The merchant bows unto the seaman's star,
> The plowman from the sun his season takes.

And we must all set our pocket watches by the clock of fate. There is a headlong, forthright tide, that bears away man with his fancies like straw, and runs fast in time and space. It is full of curves like this, your winding river of the *Oise;* and lingers and returns in pleasant pastorals; and yet, rightly thought upon, never returns

at all. For though it should revisit the same acre of meadow in the same hour, it will have made an ample sweep between whiles; many little streams will have fallen in; many exhalations risen toward the sun; and even although it were the same acre, it will not be the same river *Oise.* And thus, O graces of *Origny,* although the wandering fortune of my life should carry me back again to where you await death's whistle by the river, that will not be the old I who walks the street; and those wives and mothers, say, will those be you?

There was never any mistake about the *Oise,* as a matter of fact. In these upper reaches it was still in a prodigious hurry for the sea. It ran so fast and merrily, through all the windings of its channel, that I strained my thumb fighting with the rapids, and had to paddle all the rest of the way with one hand turned up. Sometimes it had to serve mills; and being still a little river, ran very dry and shallow in the mean while. We had to put our legs out of the boat, and shove ourselves off the sand of the bottom with our feet. And still it went on its way singing among the poplars, and making a green valley in the world. After a good woman, and a good book, and tobacco, there is nothing so agreeable on earth as a river. I forgave it its attempt on my life; which was, after all, one part owing to the unruly winds of heaven that had blown down the tree, one part to my own mismanagement, and only a third part to the river itself, and that not out of malice, but from its great preoccupation over its own business of getting to the sea. A difficult business, too; for the detours it had to make are not to be counted. The geographers seem to have given up the attempt; for I found no map represent the infinite contortion of its course. A fact will say more than any of them. After we had been some hours, three, if I mistake not, flitting by the trees at this smooth, break-neck gallop, when we came upon a hamlet and asked where we were, we had got no further than four kilometers (say two miles and a half) from *Origny.* If it were not for the honor of the thing (in the Scotch saying), we might almost as well have been standing still.

We lunched on a meadow inside a parallelogram of poplars. The leaves danced and prattled in the wind all round about us. The river hurried on meanwhile, and seemed to chide at our delay. Little we cared. The river knew where it was going; not so we; the less our hurry, where we found good quarters, and a pleasant theater for a pipe.

At that hour stock-brokers were shouting in the *Paris* Bourse for two or three per cent; but we minded them as little as the sliding stream, and sacrificed a hecatomb of minutes to the gods of tobacco and digestion. Hurry is the resource of the faithless. Where a man can trust his own heart, and those of his friends, to-morrow is as good as to-day. And if he die in the mean while, why, then, there he dies, and the question is solved.

We had to take to the canal in the course of the afternoon; because where it crossed the river there was, not a bridge, but a siphon. If it had not been for an excited fellow on the bank we should have paddled right into the siphon, and thenceforward not paddled any more. We met a man, a gentleman, on the tow-path, who was much interested in our cruise. And I was witness to a strange seizure of lying suffered by the *Cigarette;* who, because his knife came from *Norway,* narrated all sorts of adventures in that country, where he has never been. He was quite feverish at the end, and pleaded demoniacal possession.

Moy (pronounce Moÿ) was a pleasant little village, gathered round a *château* in a moat. The air was perfumed with hemp from neighboring fields. At the *Golden Sheep* we found excellent entertainment. German shells from the siege of *La Fère, Nürnberg* figures, goldfish in a bowl, and all manner of knickknacks, embellished the public room. The landlady was a stout, plain, short-sighted, motherly body, with something not far short of a genius for cookery. She had a guess of her excellence herself. After every dish was sent in, she would come and look on at the dinner for a while, with puckered, blinking eyes. *"C'est bon, n'est-ce pas?"* she would say; and, when she had received a proper answer,

she disappeared into the kitchen. That common French dish, partridge and cabbages, became a new thing in my eyes at the *Golden Sheep;* and many subsequent dinners have bitterly disappointed me in consequence. Sweet was our rest in the *Golden Sheep* at *Moy.*

LA FÈRE OF CURSED MEMORY

WE LINGERED in *Moy* a good part of the day, for we were fond of being philosophical, and scorned long journeys and early starts on principle. The place, moreover, invited to repose. People in elaborate shooting costumes sallied from the *château* with guns and game-bags; and this was a pleasure in itself, to remain behind while these elegant pleasure seekers took the first of the morning. In this way all the world may be an aristocrat, and play the duke among marquises, and the reigning monarch among dukes, if he will only outvie them in tranquillity. An imperturbable demeanor comes from perfect patience. Quiet minds can not be perplexed or frightened, but go on in fortune or misfortune at their own private pace, like a clock during a thunderstorm.

We made a very short day of it to *La Fère;* but the dusk was failing and a small rain had begun before we stowed the boats. *La Fère* is a fortified town in a plain, and has two belts of rampart. Between the first and the second extends a region of waste land and cultivated patches. Here and there along the wayside were posters forbidding trespass in the name of military engineering. At last a second gateway admitted us to the town itself. Lighted windows looked gladsome, whiffs of comfortable cookery came abroad upon the air. The town was full of the military reserve, out for the French *Autumn* maneuvers, and the reservists walked speedily and wore their formidable greatcoats. It was a fine night to be within doors over dinner, and hear the rain upon the windows.

The *Cigarette* and I could not sufficiently congratulate each other on the prospect, for we had been told there was a capital inn at *La Fère.* Such a dinner as we were going to eat! such beds as we were to sleep in! and all the while the rain raining on houseless folk over all the poplared countryside. It made our mouths water. The

inn bore the name of some woodland animal, stag, or hart, or hind, I forget which. But I shall never forget how spacious and how eminently habitable it looked as we drew near. The carriage entry was lighted up, not by intention, but from the mere superfluity of fire and candle in the house. A rattle of many dishes came to our ears; we sighted a great field of tablecloth; the kitchen glowed like a forge and smelt like a garden of things to eat.

Into this, the inmost shrine and physiological heart of a hostelry, with all its furnaces in action and all its dressers charged with viands, you are now to suppose us making our triumphal entry, a pair of damp rag-and-bone men, each with a limp india-rubber bag upon his arm. I do not believe I have a sound view of that kitchen; I saw it through a sort of glory, but it seemed to me crowded with the snowy caps of cookmen, who all turned round from their saucepans and looked at us with surprise. There was no doubt about the landlady, however; there she was, heading her army, a flushed, angry woman, full of affairs. Her I asked politely—too politely, thinks the *Cigarette*—if we could have beds, she surveying us coldly from head to foot.

"You will find beds in the suburb," she remarked. "We are too busy for the like of you."

If we could make an entrance, change our clothes, and order a bottle of wine, I felt sure we could put things right; so said I, "If we can not sleep, we may at least dine,"—and was for depositing my bag.

What a terrible convulsion of nature was that which followed in the landlady's face! She made a run at us and stamped her foot.

"Out with you,—out of the door!" she screeched. *"Sortez! sortez! sortez par la porte!"*

I do not know how it happened, but next moment we were out in the rain and darkness, and I was cursing before the carriage entry like a disappointed mendicant. Where were the boating men of *Belgium?* where the judge and his good wines? and where the graces of *Origny?* Black, black was the night after the firelit kitchen, but what was that to the blackness in our heart?

This was not the first time that I have been refused a lodging. Often and often I have planned what I should do if such a misadventure happened to me again. And nothing is easier to plan. But to put in execution, with the heart boiling at the indignity? Try it; try it only once, and tell me what you did.

It is all very fine to talk about tramps and morality. Six hours of police surveillance (such as I have had) or one brutal rejection from an inn door change your views upon the subject like a course of lectures. As long as you keep in the upper regions, with all the world bowing to you as you go, social arrangements have a very handsome air; but once get under the wheels and you wish society were at the devil. I will give most respectable men a fortnight of such a life, and then I will offer them twopence for what remains of their morality.

For my part, when I was turned out of the *Stag,* or the *Hind,* or whatever it was, I would have set the temple of *Diana* on fire if it had been handy. There was no crime complete enough to express my disapproval of human institutions. As for the *Cigarette,* I never knew a man so altered. "We have been taken for pedlers again," said he. "Good *God,* what it must be to be a pedler in reality!" He particularized a complaint for every joint in the landlady's body. *Timon* was a philanthropist alongside of him. And then, when he was at the top of his maledictory bent, he would suddenly break away and begin whimperingly to commiserate the poor. "I hope to *God,"* he said,—and I trust the prayer was answered,— "that I shall never be uncivil to a pedler." Was this the imperturbable *Cigarette?* This, this was he. Oh, change beyond report, thought, or belief!

Meantime the heaven wept upon our heads; and the windows grew brighter as the night increased in darkness. We trudged in and out of *La Fère* streets; we saw shops, and private houses where people were copiously dining; we saw stables where carters' nags had plenty of fodder and clean straw; we saw no end of reservists, who were very sorry for themselves this wet night, I doubt not, and yearned for their country homes; but had they not each

man his place in *La Fère* barracks? And we, what had we?

There seemed to be no other inn in the whole town. People gave us directions, which we followed as best we could, generally with the effect of bringing us out again upon the scene of our disgrace. We were very sad people indeed, by the time we had gone all over *La Fère;* and the *Cigarette* had already made up his mind to lie under a poplar and sup off a loaf of bread. But right at the other end, the house next the town gate was full of light and bustle. *"Bazin, aubergiste, loge à pied,"* was the sign. *"A la Croix de Malte."* There were we received.

The room was full of noisy reservists drinking and smoking; and we were very glad indeed when the drums and bugles began to go about the streets, and one and all had to snatch shakos and be off for the barracks.

Bazin was a tall man, running to fat; soft-spoken, with a delicate, gentle face. We asked him to share our wine; but he excused himself, having pledged reservists all day long. This was a very different type of the workman-innkeeper from the bawling, disputatious fellow at *Origny.* He also loved *Paris,* where he had worked as a decorative painter in his youth. There were such opportunities for self-instruction there, he said. And if any one has read *Zola's* description of the workman's marriage party visiting the *Louvre* they would do well to have heard *Bazin* by way of antidote. He had delighted in the museums in his youth. "One sees there little miracles of work," he said; "that is what makes a good workman; it kindles a spark." We asked him how he managed in *La Fère.* "I am married," he said, "and I have my pretty children. But frankly, it is no life at all. From morning to night I pledge a pack of good-enough fellows who know nothing."

It faired as the night went on, and the moon came out of the clouds. We sat in front of the door, talking softly with *Bazin.* At the guard-house opposite the guard was being forever turned out, as trains of field artillery kept clanking in out of the night or patrols of horsemen trotted by in their cloaks. Madame *Bazin* came out after a while;

she was tired with her day's work, I suppose; and she nestled up to her husband and laid her head upon his breast. He had his arm about her and kept gently patting her on the shoulder. I think *Bazin* was right, and he was really married. Of how few people can the same be said!

Little did the *Bazins* know how much they served us. We were charged for candles, for food and drink, and for the beds we slept in. But there was nothing in the bill for the husband's pleasant talk; nor for the pretty spectacle of their married life. And there was yet another item uncharged. For these people's politeness really set us up again in our own esteem. We had a thirst for consideration; the sense of insult was still hot in our spirits; and civil usage seemed to restore us to our position in the world.

How little we pay our way in life! Although we have our purses continually in our hand, the better part of service goes still unrewarded. But I like to fancy that a grateful spirit gives as good as it gets. Perhaps the *Bazins* knew how much I liked them? perhaps they, also, were healed of some slights by the thanks that I gave them in my manner?

DOWN THE OISE

THROUGH THE GOLDEN VALLEY

BELOW *La Fère* the river runs through a piece of open pastoral country; green, opulent, loved by breeders; called the *Golden Valley*. In wide sweeps, and with a swift and equable gallop, the ceaseless stream of water visits and makes green the fields. Kine, and horses, and little humorous donkeys browse together in the meadows, and come down in troops to the riverside to drink. They make a strange feature in the landscape; above all when startled, and you see them galloping to and fro, with their incongruous forms and faces. It gives a feeling as of great, unfenced pampas, and the herds of wandering nations. There were hills in the distance upon either hand; and on one side, the river sometimes bordered on the wooded spurs of *Coucy* and *St. Gobain*.

The artillery were practising at *La Fère;* and soon the cannon of heaven joined in that loud play. Two continents of cloud met and exchanged salvos overhead; while all round the horizon we could see sunshine and clear air upon the hills. What with the guns and the thunder, the herds were all frighted in the *Golden Valley*. We could see them tossing their heads, and running to and fro in timorous indecision; and when they had made up their minds, and the donkey followed the horse, and the cow was after the donkey, we could hear their hoofs thundering abroad over the meadows. It had a martial sound, like cavalry charges. And altogether, as far as the ears are concerned, we had a very rousing battle piece performed for our amusement.

At last, the guns and the thunder dropped off; the sun shone on the wet meadows; the air was scented with the breath of rejoicing trees and grass; and the river kept

unweariedly carrying us on at its best pace. There was a manufacturing district about *Chauny;* and after that the banks grew so high that they hid the adjacent country, and we could see nothing but clay sides, and one willow after another. Only here and there we passed by a village or a ferry, and some wondering child upon the bank would stare after us until we turned the corner. I dare say we continued to paddle in that child's dream for many a night after.

Sun and shower alternated like day and night, making the hours longer by their variety. When the showers were heavy I could feel each drop striking through my jersey to my warm skin; and the accumulation of small shocks put me nearly beside myself. I decided I should buy a mackintosh at *Noyon.* It is nothing to get wet; but the misery of these individual pricks of cold all over my body at the same instant of time made me flail the water with my paddle like a madman. The *Cigarette* was greatly amused by these ebullitions. It gave him something else to look at besides clay banks and willows.

All the time the river stole away like a thief in straight places, or swung round corners with an eddy; the willows nodded and were undermined all day long; the clay banks tumbled in; the Oise, which had been so many centuries making the *Golden Valley,* seemed to have changed its fancy and be bent upon undoing its performance. What a number of things a river does by simply following Gravity in the innocence of its heart!

NOYON CATHEDRAL

NOYON stands about a mile from the river, in a little plain surrounded by wooded hills, and entirely covers an eminence with its tile roofs, surmounted by a long, straight-backed cathedral with two stiff towers. As we got into the town, the tile roofs seemed to tumble up-hill one upon another, in the oddest disorder; but for all their scrambling they did not attain above the knees of the cathedral, which stood, upright and solemn, over all. As the streets drew near to this presiding genius, through the market-place under the *Hôtel de Ville,* they grew emptier and more composed. Blank walls and shuttered windows were turned to the great edifice, and grass grew on the white causeway. "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." The *Hôtel du Nord,* nevertheless, lights its secular tapers within a stone-cast of the church; and we had the superb east end before our eyes all morning from the window of our bedroom. I have seldom looked on the east end of a church with more complete sympathy. As it flanges out in three wide terraces, and settles down broadly on the earth, it looks like the poop of some great old battleship. Hollow-backed buttresses carry vases, which figure for the stern lanterns. There is a roll in the ground, and the towers just appear above the pitch of the roof, as though the good ship were bowing lazily over an *Atlantic* swell. At any moment it might be a hundred feet away from you, climbing the next billow. At any moment a window might open, and some old admiral thrust forth a cocked hat and proceed to take an observation. The old admirals sail the sea no longer; the old ships of battle are all broken up, and live only in pictures; but this, that was a church before ever they were thought upon, is still a church, and makes as brave an appearance by the *Oise.* The cathedral and the river are probably the

two oldest things for miles around; and certainly they have both a grand old age.

The *Sacristan* took us to the top of one of the towers, and showed us the five bells hanging in their loft. From above the town was a tessellated pavement of roofs and gardens; the old line of rampart was plainly traceable; and the *Sacristan* pointed out to us, far across the plain, in a bit of gleaming sky between two clouds, the towers of *Château Coucy*.

I find I never weary of great churches. It is my favorite kind of mountain scenery. Mankind was never so happily inspired as when it made a cathedral: a thing as single and specious as a statue to the first glance, and yet, on examination, as lively and interesting as a forest in detail. The height of spires can not be taken by trigonometry; they measure absurdly short, but how tall they are to the admiring eye! And where we have so many elegant proportions, growing one out of the other, and all together into one, it seems as if proportion transcended itself and became something different and more imposing. I could never fathom how a man dares to lift up his voice to preach in a cathedral. What is he to say that will not be an anticlimax? For though I have heard a considerable variety of sermons, I never yet heard one that was so expressive as a cathedral. 'Tis the best preacher itself, and preaches day and night; not only telling you of man's art and aspirations in the past, but convicting your own soul of ardent sympathies; or rather, like all good preachers, it sets you preaching to yourself, —and every man is his own doctor of divinity in the last resort.

As I sat outside of the hotel in the course of the afternoon, the sweet, groaning thunder of the organ floated out of the church like a summons. I was not averse, liking the theater so well, to sit out an act or two of the play, but I could never rightly make out the nature of the service I beheld. Four or five priests and as many choristers were singing *Miserere* before the high altar when I went in. There was no congregation but a few old women on chairs and old men kneeling on the pave-

ment. After a while a long train of young girls, walking two and two, each with a lighted taper in her hand, and all dressed in black with a white veil, came from behind the altar and began to descend the nave; the four first carrying a Virgin and child upon a table. The priests and choristers arose from their knees and followed after, singing "Ave Mary" as they went. In this order they made the circuit of the cathedral, passing twice before me where I leaned against a pillar. The priest who seemed of most consequence was a strange, down-looking old man. He kept mumbling prayers with his lips; but, as he looked upon me darkling, it did not seem as if prayer were uppermost in his heart. Two others, who bore the burden of the chant, were stout, brutal, military-looking men of forty, with bold, overfed eyes; they sang with some lustiness, and trolled forth "Ave Mary" like a garrison catch. The little girls were timid and grave. As they footed slowly up the aisle, each one took a moment's glance at the *Englishman;* and the big nun who played marshal fairly stared him out of countenance. As for the choristers, from first to last they misbehaved as only boys can misbehave, and cruelly marred the performance with their antics.

I understood a great deal of the spirit of what went on. Indeed, it would be difficult not to understand the *Miserere,* which I take to be the composition of an atheist. If it ever be a good thing to take such despondency to heart, the *Miserere* is the right music and a cathedral a fit scene.

So far I am at one with the Catholics,—an odd name for them, after all? But why, in *God's* name, these holiday choristers? why these priests who steal wandering looks about the congregation while they feign to be at prayer? why this fat nun, who rudely arranges her procession and shakes delinquent virgins by the elbow? why this spitting, and snuffing, and forgetting of keys, and the thousand and one little misadventures that disturb a frame of mind, laboriously edified with chants and organings? In any playhouse reverend fathers may see what can be done with a little art, and how, to move high senti-

ments, it is necessary to drill the supernumeraries and have every stool in its proper place.

One other circumstance distressed me. I could bear a *Miserere* myself, having had a good deal of open-air exercise of late; but I wished the old people somewhere else. It was neither the right sort of music nor the right sort of divinity for men and women who have come through most accidents by this time, and probably have an opinion of their own upon the tragic element in life. A person up in years can generally do his own *Miserere* for himself; although I notice that such an one often prefers *Jubilate Deo* for his ordinary singing. On the whole, the most religious exercise for the aged is probably to recall their own experience; so many friends dead, so many hopes disappointed, so many slips and stumbles, and withal so many bright days and smiling providences; there is surely the matter of a very eloquent sermon in all this.

On the whole, I was greatly solemnized. In the little pictorial map of our whole *Inland Voyage,* which my fancy still preserves, and sometimes unrolls for the amusement of odd moments, *Noyon* cathedral figures on a most preposterous scale, and must be nearly as large as a department. I can still see the faces of the priests as if they were at my elbow, and hear *Ave Maria, ora pro nobis* sounding through the church. All *Noyon* is blotted out for me by these superior memories; and I do not care to say more about the place. It was but a stack of brown roofs at the best, where I believe people live very reputably in a quiet way; but the shadow of the church falls upon it when the sun is low, and the five bells are heard in all quarters, telling that the organ has begun. If ever I join the church of *Rome* I shall stipulate to be Bishop of *Noyon* on the *Oise.*

DOWN THE OISE

TO COMPIÈGNE

THE most patient people grow weary at last with being continually wetted with rain; except, of course, in the Scotch *Highlands,* where there are not enough fine intervals to point the difference. That was like to be our case the day we left *Noyon.* I remember nothing of the voyage; it was nothing but clay banks, and willows, and rain; incessant, pitiless, beating rain; until we stopped to lunch at a little inn at *Pimprez,* where the canal ran very near the river. We were so sadly drenched that the landlady lit a few sticks in the chimney for our comfort; there we sat in a steam of vapor lamenting our concerns. The husband donned a game-bag and strode out to shoot; the wife sat in a far corner watching us. I think we were worth looking at. We grumbled over the misfortune of *La Fère;* we forecast other *La Fères* in the future,—although things went better with the *Cigarette* for spokesman; he had more aplomb altogether than I; and a dull, positive way of approaching a landlady that carried off the india-rubber bags. Talking of *La Fère* put us talking of the reservists.

"Reservery," said he, "seems a pretty mean way to spend one's autumn holiday."

"About as mean," returned I, dejectedly, "as canoeing."

"These gentlemen travel for their pleasure?" asked the landlady, with unconscious irony.

It was too much. The scales fell from our eyes. Another wet day, it was determined, and we put the boats into the train.

The weather took the hint. That was our last wetting. The afternoon faired up; grand clouds still voyaged in the sky, but now singly, and with a depth of blue around their path; and a sunset, in the daintiest rose and gold,

inaugurated a thick night of stars and a month of unbroken weather. At the same time, the river began to give us a better outlook into the country. The banks were not so high, the willows disappeared from along the margin, and pleasant hills stood all along its course and marked their profile on the sky.

In a little while, the canal coming to its last lock, began to discharge its water-houses on the *Oise;* so that we had no lack of company to fear. Here were all our own friends; the *Deo Gratias* of *Condé* and the *Four Sons of Aymon* journeyed cheerily down the stream along with us; we exchanged waterside pleasantries with the steersman perched among the lumber, or the driver hoarse with bawling to his horses; and the children came and looked over the side as we paddled by. We had never known all this while how much we missed them; but it gave us a fillip to see the smoke from their chimneys.

A little below this junction we made another meeting of yet more account. For there we were joined by the *Aisne,* already a far-traveled river and fresh out of *Champagne.* Here ended the adolescence of the *Oise;* this was his marriage day; thenceforward he had a stately, brimming march, conscious of his own dignity and sundry dams. He became a tranquil feature in the scene. The trees and towns saw themselves in him, as in a mirror. He carried the canoes lightly on his broad breast; there was no need to work hard against an eddy, but idleness became the order of the day, and more straightforward dipping of the paddle, now on this side, now on that, without intelligence or effort. Truly we were coming into halcyon weather upon all accounts, and were floated toward the sea like gentlemen.

We made *Compiègne* as the sun was going down: a fine profile of a town above the river. Over the bridge a regiment was parading to the drum. People loitered on the quay, some fishing, some looking idly at the stream. And as the two boats shot in along the water, we could see them pointing them out and speaking one to another. We landed at a floating lavatory, where the washerwomen were still beating the clothes.

DOWN THE OISE

AT COMPIÈGNE

WE PUT up at a big, bustling hotel in *Compiègne,* where nobody observed our presence. Reservery and general militarismus (as the Germans call it) was rampant. A camp of conical white tents without the town looked like a leaf out of a picture Bible; sword-belts decorated the walls of the *cafés,* and the streets kept sounding all day long with military music. It was not possible to be an *Englishman* and avoid a feeling of elation; for the men who followed the drums were small and walked shabbily. Each man inclined at his own angle, and jolted to his own convenience as he went. There was nothing of the superb gait with which a regiment of tall Highlanders moves behind its music, solemn and inevitable, like a natural phenomenon. Who, that has seen it, can forget the drum-major pacing in front, the drummers' tiger-skins, the pipers' swinging plaids, the strange, elastic rhythm of the whole regiment footing it in time, and the bang of the drum when the brasses cease, and the shrill pipes take up the martial story in their place?

A girl at school in *France* began to describe one of our regiments on parade to her French schoolmates, and as she went on, she told me the recollection grew so vivid, she became so proud to be the countrywoman of such soldiers, and so sorry to be in another country, that her voice failed her and she burst into tears. I have never forgotten that girl, and I think she very nearly deserves a statue. To call her a young lady, with all its niminy associations, would be to offer her an insult. She may rest assured of one thing, although she never should marry a heroic general, never see any great or immediate result of her life, she will not have lived in vain for her native land.

But though French soldiers show to ill advantage on parade, on the march they are gay, alert, and willing, like a troop of fox-hunters. I remember once seeing a company pass through the forest of *Fontainebleau,* on the *Chailly* road, between the *Bas Bréau* and the *Reine Blanche.* One fellow walked a little before the rest, and sang a loud, audacious marching song. The rest bestirred their feet, and even swung their muskets in time. A young officer on horseback had hard ado to keep his countenance at the words. You never saw anything so cheerful and spontaneous as their gait; schoolboys do not look more eagerly at hare and hounds; and you would have thought it impossible to tire such willing marchers.

My great delight in *Compiègne* was the town hall. I doted upon the town hall. It is a monument of Gothic insecurity, all turreted, and gargoyled, and slashed, and bedizened with half a score of architectural fancies. Some of the niches are gilt and painted; and in a great square panel in the center, in black relief on a gilt ground, *Louis XII.* rides upon a pacing horse, with hand on hip, and head thrown back. There is royal arrogance in every line of him; the stirruped foot projects insolently from the frame; the eye is hard and proud; the very horse seems to be treading with gratification over prostrate serfs, and to have the breath of the trumpet in his nostrils. So rides forever, on the front of the town hall, the good king *Louis XII.,* the father of his people.

Over the king's head, in the tall center turret, appears the dial of a clock; and high above that, three little mechanical figures, each one with a hammer in his hand, whose business it is to chime out the hours, and halves, and quarters for the burgesses of *Compiègne.* The center figure has a gilt breast-plate; the two others wear gilt trunk-hose; and they all three have elegant, flapping hats like cavaliers. As the quarter approaches they turn their heads and look knowingly one to the other; and then, kling go the three hammers on three little bells below. The hour follows, deep and sonorous, from the interior of the tower; and the gilded gentlemen rest from their labors with contentment.

I had a great deal of healthy pleasure from their maneuvers, and took good care to miss as few performances as possible; and I found that even the *Cigarette,* while he pretended to despise my enthusiasm, was more or less a devotee himself. There is something highly absurd in the exposition of such toys to the outrages of winter on a housetop. They would be more in keeping in a glass case before a *Nürnberg* clock. Above all, at night, when the children are abed, and even grown people are snoring under quilts, does it not seem impertinent to leave these gingerbread figures winking and tinkling to the stars and the rolling moon? The gargoyles may fitly enough twist their ape-like heads; fitly enough may the potentate bestride his charger, like a centurion in an old German print of the *Via Dolorosa;* but the toys should be put away in a box among some cotton, until the sun rises, and the children are abroad again to be amused.

In *Compiègne* post-office a great packet of letters awaited us; and the authorities were, for this occasion only, so polite as to hand them over upon application.

In some way, our journey may be said to end with this letter-bag at *Compiègne.* The spell was broken. We had partly come home from that moment.

No one should have any correspondence on a journey; it is bad enough to have to write; but the receipt of letters is the death of all holiday feeling.

"Out of my country and myself I go." I wish to take a dive among new conditions for a while, as into another element. I have nothing to do with my friends or my affections for the time; when I came away, I left my heart at home in a desk, or sent it forward with portmanteau to await me at my destination. After my journey is over, I shall not fail to read your admirable letters with the attention they deserve. But I have paid all this money, look you, and paddled all these strokes, for no other purpose than to be abroad; and yet you keep me at home with your perpetual communications. You tug the string, and I feel that I am a tethered bird. You pursue me all over *Europe* with the little vexations that I

came away to avoid. There is no discharge in the war of life, I am well aware; but shall there not be so much as a week's furlough?

We were up by six, the day we were to leave. They had taken so little note of us that I hardly thought they would have condescended on a bill. But they did, with some smart particulars, too; and we paid in a civilized manner to an uninterested clerk, and went out of that hotel, with the india-rubber bags, unremarked. No one cared to know about us. It is not possible to rise before a village; but *Compiègne* was so grown a town that it took its ease in the morning; and we were up and away while it was still in dressing-gown and slippers. The streets were left to people washing door-steps; nobody was in full dress but the cavaliers upon the town hall; they were all washed with dew, spruce in their gilding, and full of intelligence and a sense of professional responsibility. Kling went they on the bells for the half-past six, as we went by. I took it kind of them to make me this parting compliment; they never were in better form, not even at noon upon a *Sunday.*

There was no one to see us off but the early washer-women,—early and late,—who were already beating the linen in their floating lavatory on the river. They were very merry and matutinal in their ways; plunged their arms boldly in, and seemed not to feel the shock. It would be dispiriting to me, this early beginning and first cold dabble, of a most dispiriting day's work. But I believe they would have been as unwilling to change days with us as we could be to change with them. They crowded to the door to watch us paddle away into the thin sunny mists upon the river; and shouted heartily after us till we were through the bridge.

DOWN THE OISE

CHANGED TIMES

THERE is a sense in which those mists never rose from off our journey; and from that time forth they lie very densely in my note-book. As long as the *Oise* was a small, rural river it took us near by people's doors, and we could hold a conversation with natives in the riparian fields. But now that it had grown so wide, the life along shore passed us by at a distance. It was the same difference as between a great public highway and a country bypath that wanders in and out of cottage gardens. We now lay in towns, where nobody troubled us with questions; we had floated into civilized life, where people pass without salutation. In sparsely inhabited places we make all we can of each encounter; but when it comes to a city, we keep to ourselves, and never speak unless we have trodden on a man's toes. In these waters we were no longer strange birds, and nobody supposed we had traveled farther than from the last town. I remember, when we came into *L'Isle Adam,* for instance, how we met dozens of pleasure-boats outing it for the afternoon, and there was nothing to distinguish the true voyager from the amateur, except, perhaps, the filthy condition of my sail. The company in one boat actually thought they recognized me for a neighbor. Was there ever anything more wounding? All the romance had come down to that. Now, on the upper *Oise,* where nothing sailed, as a general thing, but fish, a pair of canoeists could not be thus vulgarly explained away; we were strange and picturesque intruders; and out of people's wonder sprang a sort of light and passing intimacy all along our route. There is nothing but tit for tat in this world, though sometimes it be a little difficult to trace: for the scores are older than we ourselves, and there has

never yet been a settling day since things were. You get entertainment pretty much in proportion as you give. As long as we were a sort of odd wanderers, to be stared at and followed like a quack doctor or a caravan, we had no want of amusement in return; but as soon as we sank into commonplace ourselves, all whom we met were similarly disenchanted. And here is one reason of a dozen why the world is dull to dull persons.

In our earlier adventures there was generally something to do, and that quickened us. Even the showers of rain had a revivifying effect, and shook up the brain from torpor. But now, when the river no longer ran in a proper sense, only glided seaward with an even, outright, but imperceptible speed, and when the sky smiled upon us day after day without variety, we began to slip into that golden doze of the mind which follows upon much exercise in the open air. I have stupefied myself in this way more than once: indeed, I dearly love the feeling; but I never had it to the same degree as when paddling down the *Oise*. It was the apotheosis of stupidity.

We ceased reading entirely. Sometimes, when I found a new paper, I took a particular pleasure in reading a single number of the current novel; but I never could bear more than three instalments; and even the second was a disappointment. As soon as the tale became in any way perspicuous, it lost all merit in my eyes; only a single scene, or, as is the way with these *feuilletons*, half a scene, without antecedent or consequence, like a piece of a dream, had the knack of fixing my interest. The less I saw of the novel the better I liked it: a pregnant reflection. But for the most part, as I said, we neither of us read anything in the world, and employed the very little while we were awake between bed and dinner in poring upon maps. I have always been fond of maps, and can voyage in an atlas with the greatest enjoyment. The names of places are singularly inviting; the contour of coasts and rivers is enthralling to the eye; and to hit in a map upon some place you have heard of before makes history a new possession. But we thumbed our charts, on those evenings, with the blankest unconcern. We cared not a frac-

tion for this place or that. We stared at the sheet as children listen to their rattle, and read the names of towns or villages to forget them again at once. We had no romance in the matter; there was nobody so fancy-free. If you had taken the maps away while we were studying them most intently, it is a fair bet whether we might not have continued to study the table with the same delight.

About one thing we were mightily taken up, and that was eating. I think I made a god of my belly. I remember dwelling in imagination upon this or that dish till my mouth watered; and long before we got in for the night my appetite was a clamant, instant annoyance. Sometimes we paddled alongside for a while and whetted each other with gastronomical fancies as we went. Cake and sherry, a homely refection, but not within reach upon the *Oise,* trotted through my head for many a mile; and once, as we were approaching *Verberie,* the *Cigarette* brought my heart into my mouth by the suggestion of oyster patties and *Sauterne.*

I suppose none of us recognize the great part that is played in life by eating and drinking. The appetite is so imperious that we can stomach the least interesting viands, and pass off a dinner hour thankfully enough on bread and water; just as there are men who must read something, if it were only *Bradshaw's Guide.* But there is a romance about the matter, after all. Probably the table has more devotees than love; and I am sure that food is much more generally entertaining than scenery. Do you give in, as *Walt Whitman* would say, that you are any the less immortal for that? The true materialism is to be ashamed of what we are. To detect the flavor of an olive is no less a piece of human perfection than to find a beauty in the colors of the sunset.

Canoeing was easy work. To dip the paddle at the proper inclination, now right, now left; to keep the head down stream; to empty the little pool that gathered in the lap of the apron; to screw up the eyes against the glittering sparkles of sun upon the water; or now and again to pass below the whistling tow-rope of the *Deo Gratias*

of *Condé,* or *Four Sons of Aymon,*—there was not much art in that; certainly silly muscles managed it between sleep and waking; and meanwhile the brain had a whole holiday, and went to sleep. We took in at a glance the larger features of the scene, and beheld, with half an eye, bloused fishers and dabbling washerwomen on the bank. Now and again we might be half wakened by some church spire, by a leaping fish, or by a trail of river grass that clung about the paddle and had to be plucked off and thrown away. But these luminous intervals were only partially luminous. A little more of us was called into action, but never the whole. The central bureau of nerves, what in some moods we call *Ourselves,* enjoyed its holiday without disturbance, like a Government Office. The great wheels of intelligence turned idly in the head, like fly-wheels, grinding no grist. I have gone on for half an hour at a time, counting my strokes and forgetting the hundreds. I flatter myself the beasts that perish could not underbid that, as a low form of consciousness. And what a pleasure it was! What a hearty, tolerant temper did it bring about! There is nothing captious about a man who has attained to this, the one possible apotheosis in life, the Apotheosis of Stupidity; and he begins to feel dignified and longevous like a tree.

There was one odd piece of practical metaphysics which accompanied what I may call the depth, if I must not call it the intensity, of my abstraction. What philosophers call *me* and *not me, ego* and *non ego,* preoccupied me whether I would or no. There was less *me* and more *not me* than I was accustomed to expect. I looked on upon somebody else, who managed the paddling; I was aware of somebody else's feet against the stretcher; my own body seemed to have no more intimate relation to me than the canoe, or the river, or the river banks. Nor this alone: something inside my mind, a part of my brain, a province of my proper being, had thrown off allegiance and set up for itself, or perhaps for the somebody else who did the paddling. I had dwindled into quite a little thing in a corner of myself. I was isolated in my own skull. Thoughts presented themselves unbidden; they

were not my thoughts, they were plainly some one else's; and I considered them like a part of the landscape. I take it, in short, that I was about as near *Nirvana* as would be convenient in practical life; and, if this be so, I make the Buddhists my sincere compliments; 'tis an agreeable state, not very consistent with mental brilliancy, not exactly profitable in a money point of view, but very calm, golden, and incurious, and one that sets a man superior to alarms. It may be best figured by supposing yourself to get dead drunk, and yet keep sober to enjoy it. I have a notion that open-air laborers must spend a large portion of their days in this ecstatic stupor, which explains their high composure and endurance. A pity to go to the expense of laudanum when here is a better paradise for nothing!

This frame of mind was the great exploit of our voyage, take it all in all. It was the farthest piece of travel accomplished. Indeed, it lies so far from beaten paths of language that I despair of getting the reader into sympathy with the smiling, complacent idiocy of my condition; when ideas came and went like motes in a sunbeam; when trees and church spires along the bank surged up from time to time into my notice, like solid objects through a rolling cloudland; when the rhythmical swish of boat and paddle in the water became a cradle song to lull my thoughts asleep; when a piece of mud on the deck was sometimes an intolerable eyesore, and sometimes quite a companion for me, and the object of pleased consideration; and all the time, with the river running and the shores changing upon either hand, I kept counting my strokes and forgetting the hundreds, the happiest animal in *France*.

DOWN THE OISE

CHURCH INTERIORS

WE MADE our first stage below *Compiègne* to *Pont Sainte Maxence*. I was abroad a little after six the next morning. The air was biting and smelt of frost. In an open place a score of women wrangled together over the day's market; and the noise of their negotiation sounded thin and querulous, like that of sparrows on a winter's morning. The rare passengers blew into their hands, and shuffled in their wooden shoes to set the blood agog. The streets were full of icy shadow, although the chimneys were smoking overhead in golden sunshine. If you wake early enough at this season of the year, you may get up in *December* to break your fast in *June*.

I found my way to the church, for there is always something to see about a church, whether living worshipers or dead men's tombs; you find there the deadliest earnest, and the hollowest deceit; and even where it is not a piece of history, it will be certain to leak out some contemporary gossip. It was scarcely so cold in the church as it was without, but it looked colder. The white nave was positively arctic to the eye; and the tawdriness of a continental altar looked more forlorn than usual in the solitude and the bleak air. Two priests sat in the chancel reading and waiting penitents; and out in the nave one very old woman was engaged in her devotions. It was a wonder how she was able to pass her beads when healthy young people were breathing in their palms and slapping their chests; but though this concerned me, I was yet more dispirited by the nature of her exercises. She went from chair to chair, from altar to altar, circumnavigating the church. To each shrine she dedicated an equal number of beads and an equal length of time. Like a prudent capitalist

with a somewhat cynical view of the commercial prospect, she desired to place her supplications in a great variety of heavenly securities. She would risk nothing on the credit of any single intercessor. Out of the whole company of saints and angels, not one but was to suppose himself her champion-elect against the Great Assizes! I could only think of it as a dull, transparent jugglery, based upon unconscious unbelief.

She was as dead an old woman as ever I saw; no more than bone and parchment, curiously put together. Her eyes, with which she interrogated mine, were vacant of sense. It depends on what you call seeing, whether you might not call her blind. Perhaps she had known love: perhaps borne children, suckled them, and given them pet names. But now that was all gone by, and had left her neither happier nor wiser; and the best she could do with her mornings was to come up here into the cold church and juggle for a slice of heaven. It was not without a gulp that I escaped into the streets and the keen morning air. Morning? why, how tired of it she would be before night! and if she did not sleep, how then? It is fortunate that not many of us are brought up publicly to justify our lives at the bar of threescore years and ten; fortunate that such a number are knocked opportunely on the head in what they call the flower of their years, and go away to suffer for their follies in private somewhere else. Otherwise, between sick children and discontented old folk, we might be put out of all conceit of life.

I had need of all my cerebral hygiene during that day's paddle: the old devotee stuck in my throat sorely. But I was soon in the seventh heaven of stupidity; and knew nothing but that somebody was paddling a canoe, while I was counting his strokes and forgetting the hundreds. I used sometimes to be afraid I should remember the hundreds; which would have made a toil of a pleasure; but the terror was chimerical, they went out of my mind by enchantment, and I knew no more than the man in the moon about my only occupation.

At *Creil,* where we stopped to lunch, we left the canoes in another floating lavatory, which, as it was high noon,

was packed with washerwomen, red-handed and loud-voiced; and they and their broad jokes are about all I remember of the place. I could look up my history books, if you were very anxious, and tell you a date or two; for it figured rather largely in the English wars. But I prefer to mention a girls' boarding-school, which had an interest for us because it was a girls' boarding-school, and because we imagined we had rather an interest for it. At least, there were the girls about the garden; and here were we on the river; and there was more than one handkerchief waved as we went by. It caused quite a stir in my heart; and yet how we should have wearied and despised each other, these girls and I, if we had been introduced at a croquet party! But this is a fashion I love: to kiss the hand or wave a handkerchief to people I shall never see again, to play with possibility, and knock in a peg for fancy to hang upon. It gives the traveler a jog, reminds him that he is not a traveler everywhere, and that his journey is no more than a siesta by the way on the real march of life.

The church at *Creil* was a nondescript place in the inside, splashed with gaudy lights from the windows, and picked out with medallions of the *Dolorous Way*. But there was one oddity, in the way of an *ex voto*, which pleased me hugely: a faithful model of a canal boat, swung from the vault, with a written aspiration that *God* should conduct the *Saint Nicholas* of *Creil* to a good haven. The thing was neatly executed, and would have made the delight of a party of boys on the waterside. But what tickled me was the gravity of the peril to be conjured. You might hang up the model of a seagoing ship, and welcome: one that is to plow a furrow round the world, and visit the tropic or the frosty poles, runs dangers that are well worth a candle and a mass. But the *Saint Nicholas* of *Creil*, which was to be tugged for some ten years by patient draft horses, in a weedy canal, with the poplars chattering overhead, and the skipper whistling at the tiller; which was to do all its errands in green, inland places, and never go out of sight of a village belfry in all its cruising; why, you would have thought if anything

could be done without the intervention of Providence, it would be that! But perhaps the skipper was a humorist: or perhaps a prophet, reminding people of the seriousness of life by this preposterous token.

At *Creil,* as at *Noyon,* Saint *Joseph* seemed a favorite saint on the score of punctuality. Day and hour can be specified; and grateful people do not fail to specify them on a votive tablet, when prayers have been punctually and neatly answered. Whenever time is a consideration, Saint *Joseph* is the proper intermediary. I took a sort of pleasure in observing the vogue he had in *France,* for the good man plays a very small part in my religion at home. Yet I could not help fearing that, where the saint is so much commended for exactitude, he will be expected to be very grateful for his tablet.

This is foolishness to us Protestants; and not of great importance anyway. Whether people's gratitude for the good gifts that come to them be wisely conceived or dutifully expressed is a secondary matter, after all, so long as they feel gratitude. The true ignorance is when a man does not know that he has received a good gift, or begins to imagiine that he has got it for himself. The self-made man is the funniest windbag after all! There is a marked difference between decreeing light in chaos, and lighting the gas in a metropolitan back parlor with a box of patent matches; and, do what we will, there is always something made to our hand, if it were only our fingers.

But there was something worse than foolishness placarded in *Creil* Church. *The Association of the Living Rosary* (of which I had never previously heard) is responsible for that. This association was founded, according to the printed advertisement, by a brief of Pope *Gregory* Sixteenth, on the 17th of *January,* 1832: according to a colored bas-relief, it seems to have been founded, some time or other, by the *Virgin* giving one rosary to Saint *Dominic,* and the Infant *Saviour* giving another to Saint *Catherine* of *Sienna.* Pope *Gregory* is not so imposing, but he is nearer hand. I could not distinctly make out whether the association was entirely devo-

tional, or had an eye to good works; at least it is highly organized: the names of fourteen matrons and misses were filled in for each week of the month as associates, with one other, generally a married woman, at the top for *Zélatrice,* the choragus of the band. Indulgences, plenary and partial, follow on the performance of the duties of the association. "The partial indulgences are attached to the recitation of the rosary." On "the recitation of the required *dizaine,*" a partial indulgence promptly follows. When people serve the kingdom of Heaven with a pass-book in their hands, I should always be afraid lest they should carry the same commercial spirit into their dealings with their fellow men, which would make a sad and sordid business of this life.

There is one more article, however, of happier import. "All these indulgences," it appeared, "are applicable to souls in purgatory." For *God's* sake, ye ladies of *Creil,* apply them all to the souls in purgatory without delay! *Burns* would take no hire for his last songs, preferring to serve his country out of unmixed love. Suppose you were to imitate the exciseman, mesdames, and even if the souls in purgatory were not greatly bettered, some souls in *Creil* upon the *Oise* would find themselves none the worse either here or hereafter.

I can not help wondering, as I transcribe these notes, whether a Protestant born and bred is in a fit state to understand these signs, and do them what justice they deserve; and I can not help answering that he is not. They can not look so merely ugly and mean to the faithful as they do to me. I see that as clearly as a proposition in *Euclid.* For these believers are neither weak nor wicked. They can put up their tablet commending Saint *Joseph* for his despatch as if he were still a village carpenter; they can "recite the required *dizaine,*" and metaphorically pocket the indulgences as if they had done a job for heaven; and then they can go out and look down unabashed upon this wonderful river flowing by, and up without confusion at the pin-point stars, which are themselves great worlds full of flowing rivers greater than the *Oise.* I see it as plainly, I say, as a proposition in *Euclid,*

that my Protestant mind has missed the point, and that there goes with these deformities some higher and more religious spirit than I dream.

I wonder if other people would make the same allowances for me? Like the ladies of *Creil*, having recited my rosary of toleration, I look for my indulgence on the spot.

PRÉCY AND THE MARIONETTES

WE MADE *Précy* about sundown. The plain is rich with tufts of poplar. In a wide, luminous curve the *Oise* lay under the hillside. A faint mist began to rise and confound the different distances together. There was not a sound audible but that of the sheep-bells in some meadows by the river, and the creaking of a cart down the long road that descends the hill. The villas in their gardens, the shops along the street, all seemed to have been deserted the day before; and I felt inclined to walk discreetly as one feels in a silent forest. All of a sudden we came round a corner, and there, in a little green round the church, was a bevy of girls in Parisian costumes playing croquet. Their laughter and the hollow sound of ball and mallet made a cheery stir in the neighborhood; and the look of these slim figures, all corseted and ribboned, produced an answerable disturbance in our hearts. We were within sniff of *Paris,* it seemed. And here were females of our own species playing croquet, just as if *Précy* had been a place in real life instead of a stage in the fairy-land of travel. For, to be frank, the peasant woman is scarcely to be counted as a woman at all, and after having passed by such a succession of people in petticoats digging, and hoeing, and making dinner, this company of coquettes under arms made quite a surprising feature in the landscape, and convinced us at once of being fallible males.

The inn at *Précy* is the worst inn in *France.* Not even in *Scotland* have I found worse fare. It was kept by a brother and sister, neither of whom was out of their teens. The sister, so to speak, prepared a meal for us; and the brother, who had been tippling, came in and brought with him a tipsy butcher, to entertain us as we ate. We found pieces of loowarm pork among the salad, and pieces of unknown yielding substance in the *ragoût.* The butcher

entertained us with pictures of Parisian life, with which he professed himself well acquainted; the brother sitting the while on the edge of the billiard-table, toppling precariously, and sucking the stump of a cigar. In the midst of these diversions bang went a drum past the house, and a hoarse voice began issuing a proclamation. It was a man with marionettes announcing a performance for that evening.

He had set up his caravan and lighted his candles on another part of the girls' croquet green, under one of those open sheds which are so common in *France* to shelter markets; and he and his wife, by the time we strolled up there, were trying to keep order with the audience.

It was the most absurd contention. The show-people had set out a certain number of benches; and all who sat upon them were to pay a couple of *sous* for the accommodation. They were always quite full—a bumper house—as long as nothing was going forward; but let the showwoman appear with an eye to a collection, and at the first rattle of the tambourine the audience slipped off the seats and stood round on the outside, with their hands in their pockets. It certainly would have tried an angel's temper. The showman roared from the proscenium; he had been all over *France,* and nowhere, nowhere, "not even on the borders of *Germany,*" had he met with such misconduct. Such thieves, and rogues, and rascals as he called them! And now and again the wife issued on another round, and added her shrill quota to the tirade. I remarked here, as elsewhere, how far more copious is the female mind in the material of insult. The audience laughed in high good humor over the man's declamations; but they bridled and cried aloud under the woman's pungent sallies. She picked out the sore points. She had the honor of the village at her mercy. Voices answered her angrily out of the crowd, and received a smarting retort for their trouble.

A couple of old ladies beside me, who had duly paid for their seats, waxed very red and indignant, and discoursed to each other audibly about the impudence of

these mountebanks; but as soon as the show-woman caught a whisper of this she was down upon them with a swoop; if mesdames could persuade their neighbors to act with common honesty, the mountebanks, she assured them, would be polite enough; mesdames had probably had their bowl of soup, and, perhaps, a glass of wine that evening; the mountebanks, also, had a taste for soup, and did not choose to have their little earnings stolen from them before their eyes. Once, things came as far as a brief personal encounter between the showman and some lads, in which the former went down as readily as one of his own marionettes to a peal of jeering laughter.

I was a good deal astonished at this scene, because I am pretty well acquainted with the ways of French strollers, more or less artistic; and have always found them singularly pleasing. Any stroller must be dear to the right-thinking heart; if it were only as a living protest against offices and the mercantile spirit, and as something to remind us that life is not by necessity the kind of thing we generally make it. Even a German band, if you see it leaving town in the early morning for a campaign in country places, among trees and meadows, has a romantic flavor for the imagination. There is nobody under thirty so dead but his heart will stir a little at sight of a gipsies' camp. "We are not cotton-spinners all"; or, at least, not all through. There is some life in humanity yet; and youth will now and again find a brave word to say in dispraise of riches, and throw up a situation to go strolling with a knapsack.

An Englishman has always special facilities for intercourse with French gymnasts; for *England* is the natural home of gymnasts. This or that fellow, in his tights and spangles, is sure to know a word or two of English, to have drunk English *aff-n-aff*, and, perhaps, performed in an English music-hall. He is a countryman of mine by profession. He leaps like the Belgian boating-men to the notion that I must be an athlete myself.

But the gymnast is not my favorite; he has little or no tincture of the artist in his composition; his soul is small and pedestrian, for the most part, since his profession

makes no call upon it, and does not accustom him to high ideas.

But if a man is only so much of an actor that he can stumble through a farce, he is made free of a new order of thoughts. He has something else to think about beside the money-box. He has a pride of his own, and, what is of far more importance, he has an aim before him that he can never quite attain. He has gone upon a pilgrimage that will last him his life long, because there is no end to it short of perfection. He will better himself a little day by day; or, even if he has given up the attempt, he will always remember that once upon a time he had conceived this high ideal, that once upon a time he fell in love with a star. "'Tis better to have loved and lost." Although the moon should have nothing to say to *Endymion,* although he should settle down with *Audrey* and feed pigs, do you not think he would move with a better grace and cherish higher thoughts to the end? The louts he meets at church never had a fancy above *Audrey's* snood; but there is a reminiscence in *Endymion's* heart that, like a spice, keeps it fresh and haughty.

To be even one of the outskirters of art leaves a fine stamp on a man's countenance. I remember once dining with a party in the inn at *Château Landon.* Most of them were unmistakable bagmen: others well-to-do peasantry; but there was one young fellow in a blouse, whose face stood out from among the rest surprisingly. It looked more finished; more of the spirit looked out through it; it had a living, expressive air, and you could see that his eyes took things in. My companion and I wondered greatly who and what he could be. It was fair time in *Château Landon,* and when we went along to the booths we had our question answered; for there was our friend busily fiddling for the peasants to caper to. He was a wandering violinist.

A troop of strollers once came to the inn where I was staying, in the department of *Seine et Marne.* There were a father and mother; two daughters, brazen, blowsy hussies, who sang and acted, without an idea of how to set about either; and a dark young man, like a tutor, a

recalcitrant house painter, who sang and acted not amiss.

The mother was the genius of the party, so far as genius can be spoken of with regard to such a pack of incompetent humbugs; and her husband could not find words to express his admiration for her comic countryman. "You should see my old woman," said he, and nodded his beery countenance.

One night they performed in the stable-yard with flaring lamps: a wretched exhibition, coldly looked upon by a village audience. Next night, as soon as the lamps were lighted, there came a plump of rain, and they had to sweep away their baggage as fast as possible, and make off to the barn, where they harbored, cold, wet, and supperless. In the morning a dear friend of mine, who has as warm a heart for strollers as I have myself, made a little collection, and sent it by my hands to comfort them for their disappointment. I gave it to the father; he thanked me cordially, and we drank a cup together in the kitchen, talking of roads, and audiences, and hard times.

When I was going, up got my old stroller, and off with his hat. "I am afraid," said he, "that Monsieur will think me altogether a beggar; but I have another demand to make upon him." I began to hate him on the spot. "We play again to-night," he went on. "Of course I shall refuse to accept any more money from Monsieur and his friends, who have been already so liberal. But our program of to-night is something truly creditable; and I cling to the idea that Monsieur will honor us with his presence." And then, with a shrug and a smile: "Monsieur understands,—the vanity of an artist!" Save the mark! The vanity of an artist! That is the kind of thing that reconciles me to life: a ragged, tippling, incompetent old rogue, with the manners of a gentleman and the vanity of an artist, to keep up his self-respect!

But the man after my own heart is M. de *Vauversin*. It is nearly two years since I saw him first, and indeed I hope I may see him often again.

Here is his first program as I found it on the break-

fast-table, and have kept it ever since as a relic of bright days:

"Mesdames et Messieurs,

"Mademoiselle Ferrario et M. de Vauversin auront l'honneur de chanter ce soir les morceaux suivants.

"Mademoiselle Ferrario chantera — Mignon — Oiseaux Légers — France—Des Français dorment là—Le château bleu—Où voulez-vous aller?

"M. de Vauversin—Madame Fontaine et M. Robinet—Les plongeurs à cheval—Le Mari mécontent—Tais-toi, gamin—Mon voisin l'original —Heureux comme ça—Comme on est trompé."

They made a stage at one end of the *salle-à-manger.* And what a sight it was to see M. de *Vauversin,* with a cigarette in his mouth, twanging a guitar, and following Mademoiselle *Ferrario's* eyes with the obedient, kindly look of a dog! The entertainment wound up with a tombola, or auction of lottery tickets: an admirable amusement, with all the excitement of gambling, and no hope of gain to make you ashamed of your eagerness; for there, all is loss; you make haste to be out of pocket; it is a competition who shall lose most money for the benefit of M. de *Vauversin* and Mademoiselle *Ferrario.*

M. de *Vauversin* is a small man, with a great head of black hair, a vivacious and engaging air, and a smile that would be delightful if he had better teeth. He was once an actor in the *Châtelet;* but he contracted a nervous affection from the heat and glare of the footlights, which unfitted him for the stage. At this crisis Mademoiselle *Ferrario,* otherwise Mademoiselle *Rita* of the *Alcazar,* agreed to share his wandering fortunes. "I could never forget the generosity of that lady," said he. He wears trousers so tight that it has long been a problem to all who knew him how he manages to get in and out of them. He sketches a little in water-colors, he writes verses; he is the most patient of fishermen, and spent long days at the bottom of the inn garden fruitlessly dabbling a line in the clear river.

You should hear him recounting his experiences over a bottle of wine; such a pleasant vein of talk as he has, with a ready smile at his own mishaps, and every now and then

a sudden gravity, like a man who should hear the surf roar while he was telling the perils of the deep. For it was no longer ago than last night, perhaps, that the receipts only amounted to a franc and a half to cover three francs of railway fare and two of board and lodging. The *Maire,* a man worth a million of money, sat in the front seat, repeatedly applauding Mlle. *Ferrario,* and yet gave no more than three *sous* the whole evening. Local authorities look with such an evil eye upon the strolling artist. Alas! I know it well, who have been myself taken for one, and pitilessly incarcerated on the strength of the misapprehension. Once, M. de *Vauversin* visited a commissary of police for permission to sing. The commissary, who was smoking at his ease, politely doffed his hat upon the singer's entrance. "Mr. Commissary," he began, "I am an artist." And on went the commissary's hat again. No courtesy for the companions of *Apollo!* "They are as degraded as that," said M. de *Vauversin,* with a sweep of his cigarette.

But what pleased me most was one outbreak of his, when we had been talking all the evening of the rubs, indignities, and pinchings of his wandering life. Some one said it would be better to have a million of money down, and Mlle. *Ferrario* admitted that she would prefer that mightily. *"Eh bien, moi non;*—not I," cried De *Vauversin,* striking the table with his hand. "If any one is a failure in the world, is it not I? I had an art, in which I have done things well,—as well as some, better, perhaps, than others; and now it is closed against me. I must go about the country gathering coppers and singing nonsense. Do you think I regret my life? Do you think I would rather be a fat burgess, like a calf? Not I! I have had moments when I have been applauded on the boards: I think nothing of that; but I have known in my own mind sometimes, when I had not a clap from the whole house, that I had found a true intonation, or an exact and speaking gesture; and then, messieurs, I have known what pleasure was, what it was to do a thing well, what it was to be an artist. And to know what art is, is to have an interest forever, such as no burgess can find in his petty

concerns. *Tenez, messieurs, je vais vous le dire,*—it is like a religion."

Such, making some allowance for the tricks of memory and the inaccuracies of translation, was the profession of faith of M. de *Vauversin.* I have given him his own name, lest any other wanderer should come across him, with his guitar and cigarette, and Mademoiselle *Ferrario;* for should not all the world delight to honor this unfortunate and loyal follower of the Muses? May *Apollo* send him rimes hitherto undreamed of; may the river be no longer scanty of her silver fishes to his lure; may the cold not pinch him on long winter rides, nor the village jack-in-office affront him with unseemly manners; and may he never miss Mademoiselle *Ferrario* from his side, to follow with his dutiful eyes and accompany on the guitar!

The marionettes made a very dismal entertainment. They performed a piece called *Pyramus and Thisbe,* in five mortal acts, and all written in Alexandrines fully as long as the performers. One marionette was the king; another the wicked counselor; a third, credited with exceptional beauty, represented *Thisbe;* and then there were guards, and obdurate fathers, and walking gentlemen. Nothing particular took place during the two or three acts that I sat out; but you will be pleased to learn that the unities were properly respected, and the whole piece, with one exception, moved in harmony with classical rules. That exception was the comic countryman, a lean marionette in wooden shoes, who spoke in prose and in a broad *patois* much appreciated by the audience. He took unconstitutional liberties with the person of his sovereign; kicked his fellow marionettes in the mouth with his wooden shoes, and whenever none of the versifying suitors were about, made love to *Thisbe* on his own account in comic prose.

This fellow's evolutions, and the little prologue, in which the showman made a humorous eulogium of his troop, praising their indifference to applause and hisses, and their single devotion to their art, were the only circumstances in the whole affair that you could fancy would so much as raise a smile. But the villagers of *Précy* seemed de-

lighted. Indeed, so long as a thing is an exhibition, and you pay to see it, it is nearly certain to amuse. If we were charged so much a head for sunsets, or if *God* sent round a drum before the hawthorns came in flower, what a work should we not make about their beauty! But these things, like good companions, stupid people early cease to observe; and the Abstract Bagman tittups past in his spring gig, and is positively not aware of the flowers along the lane, or the scenery of the weather overhead.

BACK TO THE WORLD

OF THE next two days' sail little remains in my mind, and nothing whatever in my note-book. The river streamed on steadily through pleasant river-side landscapes. Washerwomen in blue dresses, fishers in blue blouses, diversified the green banks; and the relation of the two colors was like that of the flower and the leaf in the *forget-me-not.* A symphony in *forget-me-not;* I think *Théophile Gautier* might thus have characterized that two days' panorama. The sky was blue and cloudless; and the sliding surface of the river held up, in smooth places, a mirror to the heaven and the shores. The washerwomen hailed us laughingly and the noise of trees and water made an accompaniment to our dozing thoughts, as we fleeted down the stream.

The great volume, the indefatigable purpose of the river, held the mind in chain. It seemed now so sure of its end, so strong and easy in its gait, like a grown man full of determination. The surf was roaring for it on the sands of *Havre.* For my own part slipping along this moving thoroughfare in my fiddle-case of a canoe, I also was beginning to grow aweary for my ocean. To the civilized man there must come, sooner or later, a desire for civilization. I was weary of dipping the paddle; I was weary of living on the skirts of life; I wished to be in the thick of it once more; I wished to get to work; I wished to meet people who understood my own speech, and could meet with me on equal terms, as a man, and no longer as a curiosity.

And so a letter at *Pontoise* decided us, and we drew up our keels for the last time out of that river of *Oise* that had faithfully piloted them, through rain and sunshine, for so long. For so many miles had this fleet and footless beast of burden charioted our fortunes that we turned our back upon it with a sense of separation. We had a long

detour out of the world, but now we were back in the familiar places, where life itself makes all the running, and we are carried to meet adventure without a stroke of the paddle. Now we were to return, like the voyager in the play, and see what rearrangements fortune had perfected the while in our surrounding; what surprises stood ready made for us at home; and whither and how far the world had voyaged in our absence. You may paddle all day long; but it is when you come back at nightfall, and look in at the familiar room, that you find Love or Death awaiting you beside the stove; and the most beautiful adventures are not those we go to seek.

TRAVELS WITH A DONKEY IN THE CÉVENNES

DEDICATION

My dear Sidney Colvin,

The journey which this little book is to describe was very agreeable and fortunate for me. After an uncouth beginning, I had the best of luck to the end. But we are all travelers in what John Bunyan calls the wilderness of this world,—all, too, travelers with a donkey; and the best that we find in our travels is an honest friend. He is a fortunate voyager who finds many. We travel, indeed, to find them. They are the end and the reward of life. They keep us worthy of ourselves; and when we are alone, we are only nearer to the absent.

Every book is, in an intimate sense, a circular letter to the friends of him who writes it. They alone take his meaning; they find private messages, assurances of love, and expressions of gratitude dropped for them in every corner. The public is but a generous patron who defrays the postage. Yet, though the letter is directed to all, we have an old and kindly custom of addressing it on the outside to one. Of what shall a man be proud, if he is not proud of his friends? And so, my dear Sidney Colvin, it is with pride that I sign myself affectionately yours,

R. L. S.

TRAVELS WITH A DONKEY IN THE CÉVENNES

VELAY

THE DONKEY, THE PACK, AND THE PACK-SADDLE

IN A LITTLE place called *Le Monastier,* in a pleasant highland valley fifteen miles from *Le Puy,* I spent about a month of fine days. *Monastier* is notable for the making of lace, for drunkenness, for freedom of language, and for unparalleled political dissension. There are adherents of each of the four French parties—Legitimists, Orleanists, Imperialists, and Republicans—in this little mountain town; and they all hate, loathe, decry, and calumniate each other. Except for business purposes, or to give each other the lie in a tavern brawl, they have laid aside even the civility of speech. 'Tis a mere mountain *Poland.* In the midst of this *Babylon* I found myself a rallying-point; every one was anxious to be kind and helpful to the stranger. This was not merely from the natural hospitality of mountain people, nor even from the surprise with which I was regarded as a man living of his own free will in *Monastier,* when he might just as well have lived anywhere else in this big world; it arose a good deal from my projected excursion southward through the *Cévennes.* A traveler of my sort was a thing hitherto unheard of in that district. I was looked upon with contempt, like a man who should project a journey to the moon, but yet with a respectful interest, like one setting forth for the inclement Pole. All were ready to help in my preparations; a crowd of sympathizers supported me at the critical moment of a bargain; not a step was taken but was heralded by glasses round and celebrated by a dinner or a breakfast.

It was already hard upon *October* before I was ready to set forth, and at the high altitudes over which my road lay there was no Indian summer to be looked for. I was determined, if not to camp out, at least to have the means of camping out in my possession; for there is nothing more harassing to an easy mind than the necessity of reaching shelter by dusk, and the hospitality of a village inn is not always to be reckoned sure by those who trudge on foot. A tent, above all for a solitary traveler, is troublesome to pitch, and troublesome to strike again; and even on the march it forms a conspicuous feature in your baggage. A sleeping-sack, on the other hand, is always ready—you have only to get into it; it serves a double purpose—a bed by night, a pormanteau by day; and it does not advertise your intention of camping out to every curious passer-by. This is a huge point. If the camp is not secret, it is but a troubled resting-place; you become a public character; the convivial rustic visits your bedside after an early supper; and you must sleep with one eye open, and be up before the day. I decided on a sleeping-sack; and after repeated visits to *Le Puy,* and a deal of high living for myself and my advisers, a sleeping-sack was designed, constructed, and triumphally brought home.

This child of my invention was nearly six feet square, exclusive of two triangular flaps to serve as a pillow by night and as the top and bottom of the sack by day. I call it "the sack," but it was never a sack by more than courtesy: only a sort of long roll or sausage, green water-proof cart-cloth without and blue sheep's fur within. It was commodious as a valise, warm and dry for a bed. There was luxurious turning room for one; and at a pinch the thing might serve for two. I could bury myself in it up to the neck; for my head I trusted to a fur cap, with a hood to fold down over my ears and a band to pass under my nose like a respirator; and in case of heavy rain I proposed to make myself a little tent, or tentlet, with my water-proof coat, three stones, and a bent branch.

It will readily be conceived that I could not carry this huge package on my own, merely human, shoulders. It

remained to choose a beast of burden. Now, a horse is a fine lady among animals, flighty, timid, delicate in eating, of tender health; he is too valuable and too restive to be left alone, so that you are chained to your brute as to a fellow galley-slave; a dangerous road puts him out of his wits; in short, he's an uncertain and exacting ally, and adds thirty-fold to the troubles of the voyager. What I required was something cheap and small and hardy, and of a stolid and peaceful temper; and all these requisites pointed to a donkey.

There dwelt an old man in *Monastier*, of rather unsound intellect according to some, much followed by street boys, and known to fame as *Father Adam*. *Father Adam* had a cart, and to draw the cart a diminutive she-ass, not much bigger than a dog, the color of a mouse, with a kindly eye and a determined underjaw. There was something neat and high-bred, a Quakerish elegance, about the rogue that hit my fancy on the spot. Our first interview was in *Monastier* market-place. To prove her good temper, one child after another was set upon her back to ride, and one after another went head over heels into the air; until a want of confidence began to reign in youthful bosoms, and the experiment was discontinued from a dearth of subjects. I was already backed by a deputation of my friends; but as if this were not enough, all the buyers and sellers came round and helped me in the bargain; and the ass and I and *Father Adam* were the center of a hubbub for near half an hour. At length she passed into my service for the consideration of sixty-five francs and a glass of brandy. The sack had already cost eighty francs and two glasses of beer; so that *Modestine*, as I instantly baptized her, was upon all accounts the cheaper article. Indeed, that was as it should be; for she was only an appurtenance of my mattress, or self-acting bedstead on four casters.

I had a last interview with *Father Adam* in a billiard-room at the witching hour of dawn, when I administered the brandy. He professed himself greatly touched by the separation, and declared he had often bought white bread for the donkey when he had been content with black bread

for himself; but this, according to the best authorities, must have been a flight of fancy. He had a name in the village for brutally misusing the ass; yet it is certain that he shed a tear, and the tear made a clean mark down one cheek.

By the advice of a fallacious local saddler, a leather pad was made for me with rings to fasten on my bundles; and I thoughtfully completed my kit and arranged my toilet. By way of armory and utensils, I took a revolver, a little spirit lamp and pan, a lantern and some halfpenny candles, a jack-knife and a large leather flask. The main cargo consisted of two entire changes of warm clothing—besides my traveling wear of country velveteen, pilot coat, and knitted spencer—some books, and my railway rug, which, being also in the form of a bag, made me a double castle for cold nights. The permanent larder was represented by cakes of chocolate and tins of Bologna sausage. All this, except what I carried about my person, was easily stowed into the sheepskin bag; and by good fortune I threw in my empty knapsack, rather for convenience of carriage than from any thought that I should want it on my journey. For more immediate needs, I took a leg of cold mutton, a bottle of Beaujolais, an empty bottle to carry milk, an egg-beater, and a considerable quantity of black bread and white, like *Father Adam,* for myself and donkey, only in my scheme of things the destinations were reversed.

Monastrians of all shades of thought in politics, had agreed in threatening me with many ludicrous misadventures, and with sudden death in many surprising forms. Cold, wolves, robbers, above all the nocturnal practical joker, were daily and eloquently forced on my attention. Yet in these vaticinations, the true, patent danger was left out. Like *Christian,* it was from my pack I suffered by the way. Before telling my own mishaps, let me, in two words, relate the lesson of my experience. If the pack is well strapped at the ends, and hung at full length—not doubled, for your life—across the pack-saddle, the traveler is safe. The saddle will certainly not fit, such is the imperfection of our transitory life; it will assuredly topple

and tend to overset; but there are stones on every roadside, and a man soon learns the art of correcting any tendency to overbalance with a well-adjusted stone.

On the day of my departure I was up a little after five; by six, we began to load the donkey; and ten minutes after, my hopes were in the dust. The pad would not stay on *Modestine's* back for half a moment. I returned it to its maker, with whom I had so contumelious a passage that the street outside was crowded from wall to wall with gossips looking on and listening. The pad changed hands with much vivacity; perhaps it would be more descriptive to say that we threw it at each other's heads; and, at any rate, we were very warm and unfriendly, and spoke with a deal of freedom.

I had a common donkey pack-saddle—a *barde,* as they call it—fitted upon *Modestine;* and once more loaded her with my effects. The doubled sack, my pilot coat (for it was warm, and I was to walk in my waistcoat), a great bar of black bread, and an open basket containing the white bread, the mutton, and the bottles, were all corded together in a very elaborate system of knots, and I looked on the result with fatuous content. In such a monstrous deck cargo, all poised *above* the donkey's shoulders, with nothing below to balance, on a brand-new pack-saddle that had not yet been worn to fit the animal, and fastened with brand-new girths that might be expected to stretch and slacken by the way, even a very careless traveler should have seen disaster brewing. That elaborate system of knots, again, was the work of too many sympathizers to be very artfully designed. It is true they tightened the cords with a will; as many as three at a time would have a foot against *Modestine's* quarters, and be hauling with clenched teeth; but I learned afterward that one thoughtful person, without any exercise of force, can make a more solid job than half a dozen heated and enthusiastic grooms. I was then but a novice; even after the misadventure of the pad nothing could disturb my security, and I went forth from the stable door as an ox goeth to the slaughter.

VELAY

THE GREEN DONKEY DRIVER

THE bell of *Monastier* was just striking nine as I got quit of these preliminary troubles and descended the hill through the common. As long as I was within sight of the windows, a secret shame and the fear of some laughable defeat withheld me from tampering with *Modestine*. She tripped along upon her four small hoofs with a sober daintiness of gait; from time to time she shook her ears or her tail; and she looked so small under the bundle that my mind misgave me. We got across the ford without difficulty—there was no doubt about the matter, she was docility itself—and once on the other bank, where the road begins to mount through pine woods, I took in my right hand the unhallowed staff, and with a quaking spirit applied it to the donkey. *Modestine* brisked up her pace for perhaps three steps, and then relapsed into her former minuet. Another application had the same effect, and so with the third. I am worthy the name of an Englishman, and it goes against my conscience to lay my hand rudely on a female. I desisted, and looked her all over from head to foot; the poor brute's knees were trembling and her breathing was distressed; it was plain that she could go no faster on a hill. God forbid, thought I, that I should brutalize this innocent creature; let her go at her own pace, and let me patiently follow.

What that pace was, there is no word mean enough to describe; it was something as much slower than a walk as a walk is slower than a run; it kept me hanging on each foot for an incredible length of time; in five minutes it exhausted the spirit and set up a fever in all the muscles of the leg.

And yet I had to keep close at hand and measure

my advance exactly upon hers; for if I dropped a few yards into the rear, or went on a few yards ahead, *Modestine* came instantly to a halt and began to browse. The thought that this was to last from here to *Alais* nearly broke my heart. Of all conceivable journeys, this promised to be the most tedious. I tried to tell myself it was a lovely day; I tried to charm my foreboding spirit with tobacco; but I had a vision ever present to me of the long, long roads, up hill and down dale, and a pair of figures ever infinitesimally moving, foot by foot, a yard to the minute, and, like things enchanted in a nightmare, approaching no nearer to the goal. In the mean time there came up behind us a tall peasant, perhaps forty years of age, of an ironical snuffy countenance, and arrayed in the green tail-coat of the country. He overtook us hand over hand, and stopped to consider our pitiful advance.

"Your donkey," says he, "is very old?"

I told him, I believed not.

Then, he supposed, we had come far.

I told him, we had but newly left *Monastier*.

"*Et vous marchez comme ça!*" cried he; and, throwing back his head, he laughed long and heartily. I watched him, half prepared to feel offended, until he had satisfied his mirth; and then, "You must have no pity on these animals," said he; and, plucking a switch out of a thicket, he began to lace *Modestine* about the sternworks, uttering a cry. The rogue pricked up her ears and broke into a good round pace, which she kept up without flagging, and without exhibiting the least symptom of distress, as long as the peasant kept beside us. Her former panting and shaking had been, I regret to say, a piece of comedy.

My *deus ex machina,* before he left me, supplied some excellent, if inhumane, advice; presented me with the switch, which he declared she would feel more tenderly than my cane; and finally taught me the true cry or masonic word of donkey drivers, "Proot!" All the time, he regarded me with a comical incredulous air, which was embarrassing to confront; and smiled over my donkey driving, as I might have smiled over his orthography, or

his green tail-coat. But it was not my turn for the moment.

I was proud of my new lore, and thought I had learned the art to perfection. And certainly *Modestine* did wonders for the rest of the forenoon, and I had a breathing space to look about me. It was Sabbath; the mountain fields were all vacant in the sunshine; and as we came down through *St. Martin de Frugères,* the church was crowded to the door, there were people kneeling without upon the steps, and the sound of the priest's chanting came forth out of the dim interior. It gave me a home feeling on the spot; for I am a countryman of the Sabbath, so to speak, and all Sabbath observances, like a Scotch accent, strike in me mixed feelings, grateful and the reverse. It is only a traveler, hurrying by like a person from another planet, who can rightly enjoy the peace and beauty of the great ascetic feast. The sight of the resting country does his spirit good. There is something better than music in the wide unusual silence; and it disposes him to amiable thoughts, like the sound of a little river or the warmth of sunlight.

In this pleasant humor I came down the hill to where *Goudet* stands in a green end of a valley, with *Château Beaufort* opposite upon a rocky steep, and the stream as clear as crystal, lying in a deep pool between them. Above and below, you may hear it wimpling over the stones, an amiable stripling of a river, which it seems absurd to call the *Loire.*

On all sides, *Goudet* is shut in by mountains; rocky footpaths, practicable at best for donkeys, join it to the outer world of *France;* and the men and women drink and swear, in their green corner, or look up at the snow-clad peaks in winter from the threshold of their homes, in an isolation, you would think, like that of *Homer's* Cyclops. But it is not so; the postman reaches *Goudet* with the letter-bag; the aspiring youth of *Goudet* are within a day's walk of the railway at *Le Puy;* and here in the inn you may find an engraved portrait of the host's nephew, *Régis Senac,* "Professor of Fencing and Champion of the two *Americas,*" a distinction gained by

Travels with a Donkey

—From a Drawing by Walter Crane

him, along with the sum of five hundred dollars, at *Tammany Hall, New York,* on the 10th *April,* 1876.

I hurried over my midday meal, and was early forth again. But, alas, as we climbed the interminable hill upon the other side, 'Proot!' seemed to have lost its virtue. I prooted like a lion, I prooted mellifluously like a sucking-dove; but *Modestine* would be neither softened nor intimidated. She held doggedly to her pace; nothing but a blow would move her, and that only for a second. I must follow at her heels, incessantly belaboring. A moment's pause in this ignoble toil, and she relapsed into her own private gait. I think I never heard of any one in as mean a situation. I must reach the lake of *Bouchet,* where I meant to camp, before sundown, and, to have even a hope of this, I must instantly maltreat this uncomplaining animal. The sound of my own blows sickened me. Once, when I looked at her, she had a faint resemblance to a lady of my acquaintance who formerly loaded me with kindness; and this increased my horror of my cruelty.

To make matters worse, we encountered another donkey, ranging at will upon the roadside; and this other donkey chanced to be a gentleman. He and *Modestine* met nickering for joy, and I had to separate the pair and beat down their young romance with a renewed and feverish bastinado. If the other donkey had had the heart of a male under his hide, he would have fallen upon me tooth and hoof; and this was a kind of consolation—he was plainly unworthy of *Modestine's* affection. But the incident saddened me, as did everything that spoke of my donkey's sex.

It was blazing hot up the valley, windless, with vehement sun upon my shoulders; and I had to labor so consistently with my stick that the sweat ran into my eyes. Every five minutes, too, the pack, the basket, and the pilot coat would take an ugly slew to one side or the other; and I had to stop *Modestine,* just when I had got her to a tolerable pace of about two miles an hour, to tug, push, shoulder, and readjust the load. And at last, in the village of *Ussel,* saddle and all, the whole hypothec turned round

and groveled in the dust below the donkey's belly. She, none better pleased, incontinently drew up and seemed to smile; and a party of one man, two women, and two children came up, and, standing round me in a half-circle, encouraged her by their example.

I had the devil's own trouble to get the thing righted; and the instant I had done so, without hesitation, it toppled and fell down upon the other side. Judge if I was hot! And yet not a hand was offered to assist me. The man, indeed, told me I ought to have a package of a different shape. I suggested, if he knew nothing better to the point in my predicament, he might hold his tongue. And the good-natured dog agreed with me smilingly. It was the most despicable fix. I must plainly content myself with the pack for *Modestine,* and take the following items for my own share of the portage: a cane, a quart flask, a pilot jacket heavily weighted in the pockets, two pounds of black bread, and an open basket full of meats and bottles. I believe I may say I am not devoid of greatness of soul; for I did not recoil from this infamous burden. I disposed it, Heaven knows how, so as to be mildly portable, and then proceeded to steer *Modestine* through the village. She tried, as was indeed her invariable habit, to enter every house and every courtyard in the whole length; and, encumbered as I was, without a hand to help myself, no words can render an idea of my difficulties. A priest, with six or seven others, was examining a church in process of repair, and he and his acolytes laughed loudly as they saw my plight. I remembered having laughed myself when I had seen good men struggling with adversity in the person of a jackass, and the recollection filled me with penitence. That was in my old light days, before this trouble came upon me. God knows at least that I shall never laugh again, thought I. But Oh, what a cruel thing is a farce to those engaged in it!

A little out of the village, *Modestine,* filled with the demon, set her heart upon a by-road, and positively refused to leave it. I dropped all my bundles, and, I am ashamed to say, struck the poor sinner twice across the face. It was pitiful to see her lift up her head with shut

eyes, as if waiting for another blow. I came very near crying; but I did a wiser thing than that, and sat squarely down by the roadside to consider my situation under the cheerful influence of tobacco and a nip of brandy. *Modestine,* in the mean while, munched some black bread with a contrite hypocritical air. It was plain that I must make a sacrifice to the gods of shipwreck. I threw away the empty bottle destined to carry milk; I threw away my own white bread, and, disdaining to act by general average, kept the black bread for *Modestine;* lastly, I threw away the cold leg of mutton and the egg-whisk, although this last was dear to my heart. Thus I found room for everything in the basket, and even stowed the boating coat on the top. By means of an end of cord I slung it under one arm; and although the cord cut my shoulder, and the jacket hung almost to the ground, it was with a heart greatly lightened that I set forth again.

I had now an arm free to thrash *Modestine,* and cruelly I chastised her. If I were to reach the lakeside before dark, she must bestir her little shanks to some tune. Already the sun had gone down into a windy-looking mist; and although there were still a few streaks of gold far off to the east on the hills and the black firwoods, all was cold and gray about our onward path. An infinity of little country by-roads led hither and thither among the fields. It was the most pointless labyrinth. I could see my destination overhead, or rather the peak that dominates it; but choose as I pleased, the roads always ended by turning away from it, and sneaking back toward the valley, or northward along the margin of the hills. The failing light, the waning color, the naked, unhomely, stony country through which I was traveling, threw me into some despondency. I promise you, the stick was not idle; I think every decent step that *Modestine* took must have cost me at least two emphatic blows. There was not another sound in the neighborhood but that of my unwearying bastinado.

Suddenly, in the midst of my toils, the load once more bit the dust, and, as by enchantment, all the cords were simultaneously loosened, and the road scattered with my

dear possessions. The packing was to begin again from the beginning; and as I had to invent a new and better system, I do not doubt but I lost half an hour. It began to be dusk in earnest as I reached a wilderness of turf and stones. It had the air of being a road which should lead everywhere at the same time; and I was falling into something not unlike despair when I saw two figures stalking toward me over the stones. They walked one behind the other like tramps, but their pace was remarkable. The son led the way, a tall, ill-made, somber, Scotch-looking man; the mother followed, all in her Sunday's best, with an elegantly embroidered ribbon to her cap, and a new felt hat atop, and proffering, as she strode along with kilted petticoats, a string of obscene and blasphemous oaths.

I hailed the son and asked him my direction. He pointed loosely west and northwest, muttered an inaudible comment, and, without slackening his pace for an instant, stalked on, as he was going, right athwart my path. The mother followed without so much as raising her head. I shouted and shouted after them, but they continued to scale the hillside, and turned a deaf ear to my outcries. At last, leaving *Modestine* by herself, I was constrained to run after them, hailing the while. They stopped as I drew near, the mother still cursing; and I could see she was a handsome, motherly, respectable-looking woman. The son once more answered me roughly and inaudibly, and was for setting out again. But this time I simply collared the mother, who was nearest me, and, apologizing for my violence, declared that I could not let them go until they had put me on my road. They were neither of them offended—rather mollified than otherwise; told me I had only to follow them; and then the mother asked me what I wanted by the lake at such an hour. I replied, in the Scotch manner, by inquiring if she had far to go herself. She told me, with another oath, that she had an hour and a half's road before her. And then, without salutation, the pair strode forward again up the hillside in the gathering dusk.

I returned for *Modestine,* pushed her briskly forward,

and, after a sharp ascent of twenty minutes, reached the edge of a plateau. The view, looking back on my day's journey, was both wild and sad. *Mount Mézenc* and the peaks beyond *St. Julien* stood out in trenchant gloom against a cold glitter in the east; and the intervening field of hills had fallen together into one broad wash of shadow, except here and there the outline of a wooded sugar-loaf in black, here and there a white irregular patch to represent a cultivated farm, and here and there a blot where the *Loire,* the *Gazeille,* or the *Lausonne* wandered in a gorge.

Soon we were on a highroad, and surprise seized on my mind as I beheld a village of some magnitude close at hand; for I had been told that the neighborhood of the lake was uninhabited except by trout. The road smoked in the twilight with children driving home cattle from the fields; and a pair of mounted stride-legged women, hat and cap and all, dashed past me at a hammering trot from the canton where they had been to church and market. I asked one of the children where I was. At *Bouchet St. Nicolas,* he told me. Thither, about a mile south of my destination, and on the other side of a respectable summit, had these confused roads and treacherous peasantry conducted me. My shoulder was cut, so that it hurt sharply; my arm ached like toothache from perpetual beating; I gave up the lake and my design to camp, and asked for the *auberge.*

VELAY

I HAVE A GOAD

THE *auberge* of *Bouchet St. Nicolas* was among the least pretentious I have ever visited; but I saw many more of the like upon my journey. Indeed, it was typical of these French highlands. Imagine a cottage of two stories, with a bench before the door; the stable and kitchen in a *suite,* so that *Modestine* and I could hear each other dining; furniture of the plainest, earthen floors, a single bedchamber for travelers, and that without any convenience but beds. In the kitchen cooking and eating go forward side by side, and the family sleep at night. Any one who has a fancy to wash must do so in public at the common table. The food is sometimes spare; hard fish and omelette have been my portion more than once; the wine is of the smallest, the brandy abominable to man; and the visit of a fat sow, grouting under the table and rubbing against your legs, is no impossible accompaniment to dinner.

But the people of the inn, in nine cases out of ten, show themselves friendly and considerate. As soon as you cross the doors you cease to be a stranger; and although this peasantry are rude and forbidding on the highway, they show a tincture of kind breeding when you share their hearth. At *Bouchet,* for instance, I uncorked my bottle of Beaujolais, and asked the host to join me. He would take but little.

"I am an amateur of such wine, do you see?" he said. "and I am capable of leaving you not enough."

In these hedge inns the traveler is expected to eat with his own knife; unless he ask, no other will be supplied: with a glass, a whang of bread, and an iron fork, the table is complately laid. My knife was cordially admired by the landlord of *Bouchet,* and the spring filled him with wonder.

"I should never have guessed that," he said. "I would bet," he added, weighing it in his hand, "that this cost you not less than five francs."

When I told him it had cost me twenty, his jaw dropped.

He was a mild, handsome, sensible, friendly old man, astonishingly ignorant. His wife, who was not so pleasant in her manners, knew how to read, although I do not suppose she ever did so. She had a share of brains and spoke with a cutting emphasis, like one who ruled the roost.

"My man knows nothing," she said, with an angry nod; "he is like the beasts."

And the old gentleman signified acquiescence with his head. There was no contempt on her part, and no shame on his; the facts were accepted loyally, and no more about the matter.

I was tightly cross-examined about my journey; and the lady understood in a moment, and sketched out what I should put into my book when I got home. "Whether people harvest or not in such or such a place; if there were forests; studies of manners; what, for example, I and the master of the house say to you; the beauties of Nature, and all that." And she interrogated me with a look.

"It is just that," said I.

"You see," she added to her husband, "I understood that."

They were both much interested by the story of my misadventures.

"In the morning," said the husband, "I will make you something better than your cane. Such a beast as that feels nothing; it is in the proverb—*dur comme un âne;* you might beat her insensible with a cudgel, and yet you would arrive at nowhere."

Something better! I little knew what he was offering.

The sleeping-room was furnished with two beds. I had one; and I will own I was a little abashed to find a young man and his wife and child in the act of mounting into the other. This was my first experience of the sort; and if I am always to feel equally silly and extraneous, I pray God it be my last as well. I kept my eyes to myself, and know nothing of the woman except that she had beautiful

arms, and seemed no whit abashed by my appearance. As a matter of fact, the situation was more trying to me than to the pair. A pair keep each other in countenance; it is the single gentleman who has to blush. But I could not help attributing my sentiments to the husband, and sought to conciliate his tolerance with a cup of brandy from my flask. He told me that he was a cooper of *Alais* traveling to *St. Etienne* in search of work, and that in his spare moments he followed the fatal calling of a maker of matches. Me he readily enough divined to be a brandy merchant.

I was up first in the morning (*Monday, September 23d*), and hastened my toilet guiltily, so as to leave a clear field for madam, the cooper's wife. I drank a bowl of milk, and set off to explore the neighborhood of *Bouchet*. It was perishing cold, a gray, windy, wintry morning; misty clouds flew fast and low; the wind piped over the naked platform; and the only speck of color was away behind *Mount Mézenc* and the eastern hills, where the sky still wore the orange of the dawn.

It was five in the morning, and four thousand feet above the sea; and I had to bury my hands in my pockets and trot. People were trooping out to the labors of the field by twos and threes, and all turned round to stare upon the stranger. I had seen them coming back last night, I saw them going afield again; and there was the life of *Bouchet* in a nutshell.

When I came back to the inn for a bit of breakfast, the landlady was in the kitchen combing out her daughter's hair; and I made her my compliments upon its beauty.

"Oh no," said the mother; "it is not so beautiful as it ought to be. Look, it is too fine."

Thus does a wise peasantry console itself under adverse physical circumstances, and, by a startling democratic process, the defects of the majority decide the type of beauty.

"And where," said I, "is monsieur?"

"The master of the house is upstairs," she answered, "making you a goad."

Blessed be the man who invented goads! Blessed the

innkeeper of *Bouchet St. Nicolas,* who introduced me to their use! This plain wand, with an eighth of an inch of pin, was indeed a scepter when he put it in my hands. Thenceforward *Modestine* was my slave. A prick, and she passed the most inviting stable door. A prick, and she broke forth into a gallant little trotlet that devoured the miles. It was not a remarkable speed, when all was said; and we took four hours to cover ten miles at the best of it. But what a heavenly change since yesterday! No more wielding of the ugly cudgel; no more flailing with an aching arm; no more broadsword exercise, but a discreet and gentlemanly fence. And what although now and then a drop of blood should appear on *Modestine's* mouse-colored wedge-like rump? I should have preferred it otherwise, indeed; but yesterday's exploits had purged my heart of all humanity. The perverse little devil, since she would not be taken with kindness, must even go with pricking.

It was bleak and bitter cold, and, except a cavalcade of stride-legged ladies and a pair of post-runners, the road was dead solitary all the way to *Pradelles.* I scaree remember an incident but one. A handsome foal with a bell about his neck came charging up to us upon a stretch of common, sniffed the air martially as one about to do great deeds, and, suddenly thinking otherwise in his green young heart, put about and galloped off as he had come, the bell tinkling in the wind. For a long while afterward I saw his noble attitude as he drew up, and heard the note of his bell; and when I struck the highroad, the song of the telegraph wires seemed to continue the same music.

Pradelles stands on a hillside, high above the *Allier,* surrounded by rich meadows. They were cutting aftermath on all sides, which gave the neighborhood, this gusty autumn morning, an untimely smell of hay. On the opposite bank of the *Allier* the land kept mounting for miles to the horizon: a tanned and sallow autumn landscape, with black blots of fir wood and white roads wandering through the hills. Over all this the clouds shed a uniform and purplish shadow, sad and somewhat menacing, exaggerating height and distance, and throwing into still

higher relief the twisted ribbons of the highway. It was a cheerless prospect, but one stimulating to a traveler. For I was now upon the limit of *Velay,* and all that I beheld lay in another county—wild *Gévaudan,* mountainous, uncultivated, and but recently disforested from terror of the wolves.

Wolves, alas, like bandits, seem to flee the traveler's advance; and you may trudge through all our comfortable Europe, and not meet with an adventure worth the name. But here, if anywhere, a man was on the frontiers of hope. For this was the land of the ever-memorable BEAST, the *Napoléon Buonaparte* of wolves. What a career was his! He lived ten months at free quarters in *Gévaudan* and *Vivarais;* he ate women and children and "shepherdesses celebrated for their beauty"; he pursued armed horsemen; he has been seen at broad noonday chasing a post-chaise and outrider along the king's highroad, and chaise and outrider fleeing before him at the gallop. He was placarded like a political offender, and ten thousand francs were offered for his head. And yet, when he was shot and sent to Versailles, behold! a common wolf, and even small for that. "Though I could reach from pole to pole," sang *Alexander Pope;* the little corporal shook *Europe;* and if all wolves had been as this wolf, they would have changed the history of man. *M. Elie Berthet* has made him the hero of a novel, which I have read, and do not wish to read again.

I hurried over my lunch, and was proof against the landlady's desire that I should visit our *Lady of Pradelles,* "who performed many miracles, although she was of wood"; and before three-quarters of an hour I was goading *Modestine* down the steep descent that leads to *Langogne* on the *Allier.* On both sides of the road, in big dusty fields, farmers were preparing for next spring. Every fifty yards a yoke of great-necked stolid oxen were patiently haling at the plow. I saw one of these mild, formidable servants of the glebe, who took a sudden interest in *Modestine* and me. The furrow down which he was journeying lay at an angle to the road, and his head was solidly fixed to the yoke like those of caryatids below

a ponderous cornice; but he screwed round his big honest eyes and followed us with a ruminating look, until his master bade him turn the plow and proceed to reascend the field. From all these furrowing plowshares, from the feet of oxen, from a laborer here and there who was breaking the dry clods with a hoe, the wind carried away a thin dust like so much smoke. It was a fine, busy, breathing, rustic landscape; and as I continued to descend, the highlands of *Gévaudan* kept mounting in front of me against the sky.

I had crossed the *Loire* the day before; now I was to cross the *Allier;* so near are these two confluents in their youth. Just at the bridge of *Langogne,* as the long-promised rain was beginning to fall, a lassie of some seven or eight addressed me in the sacramental phrase, *"D'où'st que vous venez?"* She did it with so high an air that she set me laughing; and this cut her to the quick. She was evidently one who reckoned on respect, and stood looking after me in silent dudgeon, as I crossed the bridge and entered the county of *Gévaudan.*

UPPER GÉVAUDAN

A CAMP IN THE DARK

"The way also here was very wearisome through dirt and slabbiness; nor was there on all this ground so much as one inn or victualing-house wherein to refresh the feebler sort."—*Pilgrim's Progress.*

THE next day (*Tuesday, September 24th*), it was two o'clock in the afternoon before I got my journal written up and my knapsack repaired, for I was determined to carry my knapsack in the future and have no more ado with baskets; and half an hour afterward I set out for *Le Cheylard l'Evêque,* a place on the borders of the forest of *Mercoire.* A man, I was told, should walk there in an hour and a half; and I thought it scarce too ambitious to suppose that a man encumbered with a donkey might cover the same distance in four hours.

All the way up the long hill from *Langogne* it rained and hailed alternately; the wind kept freshening steadily, although slowly; plentiful hurrying clouds—some dragging veils of straight rain-shower, others massed and luminous, as though promising snow—careered out of the north and followed me along my way. I was soon out of the cultivated basin of the *Allier,* and away from the plowing oxen, and such like sights of the country. Moor, heathery marsh, tracts of rock and pines, woods of birch all jeweled with the autumn yellow, here and there a few naked cottages and bleak fields,—these were the characters of the country. Hill and valley followed valley and hill; the little green and stony cattle-tracks wandered in and out of one another, split into three or four, died away in marshy hollows, and began again sporadically on hillsides or at the borders of a wood.

There was no direct road to *Cheylard,* and it was no easy affair to make a passage in this uneven country and through this intermittent labyrinth of tracks. It must have been about four when I struck *Sagnerousse,* and

went on my way rejoicing in a sure point of departure. Two hours afterward, the dusk falling rapidly, in a lull of the wind, I issued from a fir wood where I had long been wandering, and found, not the looked-for village, but another marish bottom among rough-and-tumble hills. For some time past I had heard the ringing of cattle-bells ahead; and now, as I came out of the skirts of the wood, I saw near upon a dozen cows and perhaps as many more black figures, which I conjectured to be children, although the mist had almost unrecognizably exaggerated their forms. These were all silently following each other round and round in a circle, now taking hands, now breaking up with chains and reverences. A dance of children appeals to very innocent and lively thoughts; but, at nightfall on the marshes, the thing was eery and fantastic to behold. Even I, who am well enough read in *Herbert Spencer,* felt a sort of silence fall for an instant on my mind. The next I was pricking *Modestine* forward, and guiding her like an unruly ship through the open. In a path, she went doggedly ahead of her own accord, as before a fair wind; but once on the turf or among heather, and the brute became demented. The tendency of lost travelers to go round in a circle was developed in her to the degree of passion, and it took all the steering I had in me to keep even a decently straight course through a single field.

While I was thus desperately tacking through the bog, children and cattle began to disperse, until only a pair of girls remained behind. From these I sought direction on my path. The peasantry in general were but little disposed to counsel a wayfarer. One old devil simply retired into his house, and barricaded the door on my approach; and I might beat and shout myself hoarse, he turned a deaf ear. Another, having given me a direction which, as I found afterward, I had misunderstood, complacently watched me going wrong without adding a sign. He did not care a stalk of parsley if I wandered all night upon the hills! As for these two girls, they were a pair of impudent sly sluts, with not a thought but mischief. One put out her tongue at me, the other bade me follow the cows; and they both giggled and jogged each other's elbows.

The Beast of *Gévaudan* ate about a hundred children of this district; I began to think of him with sympathy.

Leaving the girls, I pushed on through the bog, and got into another wood and upon a well-marked road. It grew darker and darker. *Modestine,* suddenly beginning to smell mischief, bettered the pace of her own accord, and from that time forward gave me no trouble. It was the first sign of intelligence I had occasion to remark in her. At the same time, the wind freshened into half a gale, and another heavy discharge of rain came flying up out of the north. At the other side of the wood I sighted some red windows in the dusk. This was the hamlet of *Fouzilhic;* three houses on a hillside, near a wood of birches. Here I found a delightful old man, who came a little way with me in the rain to put me safely on the road for *Cheylard.* He would hear of no reward; but shook his hands above his head almost as if in menace, and refused volubly and shrilly, in unmitigated *patois.*

All seemed right at last. My thoughts began to turn upon dinner and a fireside, and my heart was agreeably softened in my bosom. Alas, and I was on the brink of new and greater miseries! Suddenly, at a single swoop, the night fell. I have been abroad in many a black night, but never in a blacker. A glimmer of rocks, a glimmer of the track where it was well beaten, a certain fleecy density, or night within night, for a tree—this was all that I could discriminate. The sky was simply darkness overhead; even the flying clouds pursued their way invisibly to human eyesight. I could not distinguish my hand at arm's length from the track, nor my goad, at the same distance, from the meadows or the sky.

Soon the road that I was following split, after the fashion of the country, into three or four in a piece of rocky meadow. Since *Modestine* had shown such a fancy for beaten roads, I tried her instinct in this predicament. But the instinct of an ass is what might be expected from the name; in half a minute she was clambering round and round among some boulders, as lost a donkey as you would wish to see. I should have camped long before had I been properly provided; but as this was to be so short a stage, I

had brought no wine, no bread for myself, and a little over a pound for my lady friend. Add to this, that I and *Modestine* were both handsomely wetted by the showers. But now, if I could have found some water, I should have camped at once in spite of all. Water, however, being entirely absent, except in the form of rain, I determined to return to *Fouzilhic,* and ask a guide a little further on my way—"a little farther lend thy guiding hand."

The thing was easy to decide, hard to accomplish. In this sensible roaring blackness I was sure of nothing but the direction of the wind. To this I set my face; the road had disappeared, and I went across country, now in marshy opens, now baffled by walls unscalable to *Modestine,* until I came once more in sight of some red windows. This time they were differently disposed. It was not *Fouzilhic,* but *Fouzilhac,* a hamlet little distant from the other in space, but worlds away in the spirit of its inhabitants. I tied *Modestine* to a gate, and groped forward, stumbling among rocks, plunging mid-leg in bog, until I gained the entrance of the village. In the first lighted house there was a woman who would not open to me. She could do nothing, she cried to me through the door, being alone and lame; but if I would apply at the next house, there was a man who could help me if he had a mind.

They came to the next door in force, a man, two women, and a girl, and brought a pair of lanterns to examine the wayfarer. The man was not ill-looking, but had a shifty smile. He leaned against the door-post, and heard me state my case. All I asked was a guide as far as *Cheylard.*

"C'est que, voyez-vous il fait noir," said he.

I told him that was just my reason for requiring help.

"I understand that," said he, looking uncomfortable; *"mais—c'est—de la peine."*

I was willing to pay, I said. He shook his head. I rose as high as ten francs; but he continued to shake his head. "Name your own price, then," said I.

"Ce n'est pas ça," he said at length, and with evident difficulty; "but I am not going to cross the door—*mais je ne sortirai pas de la porte."*

I grew a little warm, and asked him what he proposed that I should do.

"Where are you going beyond *Cheylard?*" he asked by way of answer.

"That is no affair of yours," I returned, for I was not going to indulge his bestial curiosity; "it changes nothing in my present predicament."

"*C'est vrai, ça,*" he acknowledged with a laugh; "*oui, c'est vrai. Et d'où venez-vous?*"

A better man than I might have felt nettled.

"Oh," said I, "I am not going to answer any of your questions, so you may spare yourself the trouble of putting them. I am late enough already; I want help. If you will not guide me yourself, at least help me to find some one else who will."

"Hold on," he cried suddenly. "Was it not you who passed in the meadow while it was still day?"

"Yes, yes," said the girl, whom I had not hitherto recognized; "it was monsieur, I told him to follow the cow."

"As for you, mademoiselle," said I, "you are a *farceuse.*"

"And," added the man, "what the devil have you done to be still here?"

What the devil, indeed! But there I was. "The great thing," said I, "is to make an end of it"; and once more proposed that he should help me to find a guide.

"*C'est que,*" he said again, "*c'est que—il fait noir.*"

"Very well," said I; "take one of your lanterns."

"No," he cried, drawing a thought backward, and again entrenching himself behind one of his former phrases; "I will not cross the door."

I looked at him. I saw unaffected terror struggling on his face with unaffected shame; he was smiling pitifully and wetting his lip with his tongue, like a detected schoolboy.

I drew a brief picture of my state, and asked him what I was to do.

"I don't know," he said; "I will not cross the door."

Here was the Beast of *Gévaudan,* and no mistake.

"Sir," said I, with my most commanding manners, "you are a coward."

And with that I turned my back upon the family party, who hastened to retire within their fortifications; and the famous door was closed again, but not till I had overheard the sound of laughter. *Filia barbara pater barbarior.* Let me say it in the plural: the Beasts of *Gévaudan.*

The lanterns had somewhat dazzled me, and I plowed distressfully among stones and rubbish heaps. All the other houses in the village were both dark and silent; and though I knocked at here and there a door, my knocking was unanswered. It was a bad business; I gave up *Fouzilhac* with my curses. The rain had stopped, and the wind, which still kept rising, began to dry my coat and trousers. "Very well," thought I "water or no water, I must camp." But the first thing was to return to *Modestine.* I am pretty sure I was twenty minutes groping for my lady in the dark; and if it had not been for the unkindly services of the bog, into which I once more stumbled, I might have still been groping for her at the dawn. My next business was to gain the shelter of a wood, for the wind was cold as well as boisterous. How, in this well-wooded district, I should have been so long in finding one, is another of the insoluble mysteries of this day's adventures; but I will take my oath that I put near an hour to the discovery.

At last black trees began to show up on my left, and, suddenly crossing the road, made a cave of unmitigated blackness right in front. I call it a cave without exaggeration; to pass below that arch of leaves was like entering a dungeon. I felt about until my hand encountered a stout branch, and to this I tied *Modestine,* a haggard, drenched, desponding donkey. Then I lowered my pack, laid it along the wall on the margin of the road, and unbuckled the straps. I knew well enough where the lantern was; but where were the candles? I groped and groped among the tumbled articles, and, while I was thus groping, suddenly I touched the spirit lamp. Salvation! This would serve my turn as well. The wind roared un-

wearyingly among the trees; I could hear the boughs tossing and the leaves churning through half a mile of forest; yet the scene of my encampment was not only as black as the pit, but admirably sheltered. At the second match the wick caught flame. The light was both livid and shifting; but it cut me off from the universe, and doubled the darkness of the surrounding light.

I tied *Modestine* more conveniently for herself, and broke up half the black bread for her supper, reserving the other half against the morning. Then I gathered what I should want within reach, took off my wet boots and gaiters, which I wrapped in my waterproof, arranged my knapsack for a pillow under the flap of my sleeping-bag, insinuated my limbs into the interior, and buckled myself in like a bambino. I opened a tin of Bologna sausage and broke a cake of chocolate, and that was all I had to eat. It may sound offensive, but I ate them together, bite by bite, by way of bread and meat. All I had to wash down this revolting mixture was neat brandy: a revolting beverage in itself. But I was rare and hungry; ate well, and smoked one of the best cigarettes in my experience. Then I put a stone in my straw hat, pulled the flap of my fur cap over my neck and eyes, put my revolver ready to my hand, and snuggled well down among the sheepskins.

I questioned at first if I were sleepy, for I felt my heart beating faster than usual, as if with an agreeable excitement to which my mind remained a stranger. But as soon as my eyelids touched, that subtle glue leaped between them, and they would no more come separate. The wind among the trees was my lullaby. Sometimes it sounded for minutes together with a steady even rush, not rising nor abating; and again it would swell and burst like a great crashing breaker, and the trees would patter me all over with big drops from the rain of the afternoon. Night after night, in my own bedroom in the country, I have given ear to this perturbing concert of the wind among the woods; but whether it was a difference in the trees, or the lie of the ground, or because I was myself outside and in the midst of it, the fact re-

mains that the wind sang to a different tune among these woods of *Gévaudan.* I harkened and harkened; and meanwhile sleep took gradual possession of my body and subdued my thoughts and senses; but still my last waking effort was to listen and distinguish, and my last conscious state was one of wonder at the foreign clamor in my ears.

Twice in the course of the dark hours—once when a stone galled me underneath the sack, and again when the poor patient *Modestine,* growing angry, pawed and stamped upon the road—I was recalled for a brief while to consciousness, and saw a star or two overhead, and the lace-like edge of the foliage against the sky. When I awoke for the third time (*Wednesday, September 25th*), the world was flooded with a blue light, the mother of the dawn. I saw the leaves laboring in the wind and the ribbon of the road; and, on turning my head, there was *Modestine* tied to a beech, and standing half across the path in an attitude of inimitable patience. I closed my eyes again, and set to thinking over the experience of the night. I was surprised to find how easy and pleasant it had been, even in this tempestuous weather. The stone which annoyed me would not have been there, had I not been forced to camp blindfold in the opaque night; and I had felt no other inconvenience, except when my feet encountered the lantern or the second volume of *Peyrat's Pastors of the Desert* among the mixed contents of my sleeping-bag; nay more, I had felt not a touch of cold, and awakened with unusually lightsome and clear sensations.

With that, I shook myself, got once more into my boots and gaiters, and, breaking up the rest of the bread for *Modestine,* strolled about to see in what part of the world I had awakened. *Ulysses,* left on *Ithaca,* and with a mind unsettled by the goddess, was not more pleasantly astray. I have been after an adventure all my life, a pure dispassionate adventure, such as befell early and heroic voyagers; and thus to be found by morning in a random woodside nook in *Gévaudan*—not knowing north from south, as strange to my surroundings as the first man upon

the earth, an inland castaway—was to find a fraction of my day-dreams realized. I was on the skirts of a little wood of birch, sprinkled with a few beeches; behind, it adjoined another wood of fir; and in front, it broke up and went down in open order into a shallow and meadowy dale. All around there were bare hilltops, some near, some far away, as the perspective closed and opened, but none apparently much higher than the rest. The wind huddled the trees. The golden specks of autumn in the birches tossed shiveringly. Overhead the sky was full of strings and shreds of vapor, flying, vanishing, reappearing, and turning about an axis like tumblers, as the wind hounded them through heaven. It was wild weather and famishing cold. I ate some chocolate, swallowed a mouthful of brandy, and smoked a cigarette before the cold should have time to disable my fingers. And by the time I had got all this done, and had made my pack and bound it on the pack-saddle, the day was tiptoe on the threshold of the east. We had not gone many steps along the lane, before the sun, still invisible to me, sent a glow of gold over some cloud mountains that lay ranged along the eastern sky.

The wind had us on the stern, and hurried us bitingly forward. I buttoned myself into my coat, and walked on in a pleasant frame of mind with all men, when suddenly, at a corner, there was *Fouzilhic* once more in front of me. Nor only that, but there was the old gentleman who had escorted me so far the night before, running out of his house at sight of me, with hands upraised in horror.

"My poor boy!" he cried, "what does this mean?"

I told him what had happened. He beat his old hands like clappers in a mill, to think how lightly he had let me go; but when he heard of the man of *Fouzilhac,* anger and depression seized upon his mind.

"This time, at least," said he, "there shall be no mistake."

And he limped along, for he was very rheumatic, for about half a mile, and until I was almost within sight of *Cheylard,* the destination I had hunted for so long.

UPPER GÉVAUDAN

CHEYLARD AND LUC

CANDIDLY, it seemed little worthy of all this searching. A few broken ends of village, with no particular street, but a succession of open places heaped with logs and fagots; a couple of tilted crosses, a shrine to our *Lady of all Graces* on the summit of a little hill; and all this, upon a rattling highland river, in the corner of a naked valley. What went ye out for to see? thought I to myself. But the place had a life of its own. I found a board commemorating the liberalities of *Cheylard* for the past year, hung up, like a banner, in the diminutive and tottering church. In 1877, it appeared, the inhabitants subscribed forty-eight francs ten centimes for the "Work of the Propagation of the Faith." Some of this, I could not help hoping, would be applied to my native land. *Cheylard* scrapes together halfpence for the darkened souls in *Edinburgh;* while *Balquidder* and *Dunrossness* bemoan the ignorance of *Rome.* Thus, to the high entertainment of the angels, do we pelt each other with evangelists, like schoolboys bickering in the snow.

The inn was again singularly unpretentious. The whole furniture of a not ill-to-do family was in the kitchen: the beds, the cradle, the clothes, the plate-rack, the meal-chest, and the photograph of the parish priest. There were five children, one of whom was set to its morning prayers at the stair-foot soon after my arrival, and a sixth would ere long be forthcoming. I was kindly received by these good folk. They were much interested in my misadventure. The wood in which I had slept belonged to them; the man of *Fouzilhac* they thought a monster of iniquity, and counseled me warmly to summon him at law—"because I might have died." The good wife was

horror-stricken to see me drink over a pint of uncreamed milk.

"You will do yourself an evil," she said. "Permit me to boil it for you."

After I had begun the morning on this delightful liquor, she having an infinity of things to arrange, I was permitted, nay requested, to make a bowl of chocolate for myself. My boots and gaiters were hung up to dry, and, seeing me trying to write my journal on my knee, the eldest daughter let down a hinged table in the chimney-corner for my convenience. Here I wrote, drank my chocolate, and finally ate an omelette before I left. The table was thick with dust; for, as they explained, it was not used except in winter weather. I had a clear look up the vent, through brown agglomerations of soot and blue vapor, to the sky; and whenever a handful of twigs was thrown on to the fire, my legs were scorched by the blaze.

The husband had begun life as a muleteer, and when I came to charge *Modestine* showed himself full of the prudence of his art. "You will have to change this package," said he; "it ought to be in two parts, and then you might have double the weight."

I explained that I wanted no more weight; and for no donkey hitherto created would I cut my sleeping-bag in two.

"It fatigues her, however," said the innkeeper; "it fatigues her greatly on the march. Look."

Alas, there were her two forelegs no better than raw beef on the inside, and blood was running from under her tail. They told me when I left, and I was ready to believe it, that before a few days I should come to love *Modestine* like a dog. Three days had passed, we had shared some misadventures, and my heart was still as cold as a potato toward my beast of burden. She was pretty enough to look at; but then she had given proof of dead stupidity, redeemed indeed by patience, but aggravated by flashes of sorry and ill-judged light-heartedness. And I own this new discovery seemed another point against her. What the devil was the good of a she-ass if she

could not carry a sleeping-bag and a few necessaries? I saw the end of the fable rapidly approaching, when I should have to carry *Modestine*. *Æsop* was the man to know the world! I assure you I set out with heavy thoughts upon my short day's march.

It was not only heavy thoughts about *Modestine* that weighted me upon the way; it was a leaden business altogether. For first, the wind blew so rudely that I had to hold on the pack with one hand from *Cheylard* to *Luc;* and second, my road lay through one of the most beggarly countries in the world. It was like the worst of the Scotch Highlands, only worse; cold, naked, and ignoble, scant of wood, scant of heather, scant of life. A road and some fences broke the unvarying waste, and the line of the road was marked by upright pillars, to serve in time of snow.

Why any one should desire to visit either *Luc* or *Cheylard* is more than my much inventing spirit can suppose. For my part, I travel not to go anywhere, but to go. I travel for travel's sake. The great affair is to move; to feel the needs and hitches of our life more nearly; to come down off this feather bed of civilization, and find the globe granite underfoot and strewn with cutting flints. Alas, as we get up in life, and are more preoccupied with our affairs, even a holiday is a thing that must be worked for. To hold a pack upon a pack-saddle against a gale out of the freezing north is no high industry, but it is one that serves to occupy and compose the mind. And when the present is so exacting, who can annoy himself about the future?

I came out at length above the *Allier*. A more unsightly prospect at this season of the year it would be hard to fancy. Shelving hills rose round it on all sides, here dabbled with wood and fields, there rising to peaks alternately naked and hairy with pines. The color throughout was black or ashen, and came to a point in the ruins of the castle of *Luc,* which pricked up impudently from below my feet, carrying on a pinnacle a tall white statue of our Lady, which I heard with interest, weighed fifty quintals, and was to be dedicated on the 6th day of

October. Through this sorry landscape trickled the *Allier* and a tributary of nearly equal size, which came down to join it through a broad nude valley in *Vivarais*. The weather had somewhat lightened, and the clouds massed in squadron; but the fierce wind still hunted them through heaven, and cast great ungainly splashes of shadow and sunlight over the scene.

Luc itself was a straggling double file of houses wedged between hill and river. It had no beauty, nor was there any notable feature, save the old castle overhead with its fifty quintals of brand-new Madonna. But the inn was clean and large. The kitchen, with its two box beds hung with clean check curtains, with its wide stone chimney, its chimney-shelf four yards long and garnished with lanterns and religious statuettes, its array of chests and pair of ticking clocks, was the very model of what a kitchen ought to be; a melodrama kitchen, suitable for bandits or noblemen in disguise. Nor was the scene disgraced by the landlady, a handsome, silent, dark old woman, clothed and hooded in black like a nun. Even the public bedroom had a character of its own, with the long deal tables and benches, where fifty might have dined, set out as for a harvest-home, and the three box beds along the wall. In one of these, lying on straw and covered with a pair of table-napkins, did I do penance all night long in goose-flesh and chattering teeth, and sigh from time to time as I awakened for my sheepskin sack and the lee of some great wood.

OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS

FATHER APOLLINARIS

"I behold
The House, the Brotherhood austere—
And what am I, that I am here?"
MATTHEW ARNOLD.

NEXT morning (*Thursday, 26th September*) I took the road in a new order. The sack was no longer doubled, but hung at full length across the saddle, a green sausage six feet long with a tuft of blue wool hanging out of either end. It was more picturesque, it spared the donkey, and, as I began to see, it would insure stability, blow high, blow low. But it was not without a pang that I had so decided. For although I had purchased a new cord, and made all as fast as I was able, I was yet jealously uneasy lest the flaps should tumble out and scatter my effects along the line of march.

My way lay up the bald valley of the river, along the march of *Vivarais* and *Gévaudan*. The hills of *Gévaudan* on the right were a little more naked, if anything, than those of *Vivarais* upon the left, and the former had a monopoly of a low dotty underwood that grew thickly in the gorges and died out in solitary burs upon the shoulders and the summits. Black bricks of fir wood were plastered here and there upon both sides, and here and there were cultivated fields. A railway ran beside the river; the only bit of railway in *Gévaudan,* although there are many proposals afoot and surveys being made, and even, as they tell me, a station standing ready built in *Mende.* A year or two hence and this may be another world. The desert is beleaguered. Now may some Languedocian *Wordsworth* turn the sonnet into *patois:* "Mountains and vales and floods, heard YE that whistle?"

At a place called *La Bastide* I was directed to leave the

river, and follow a road that mounted on the left among the hills of *Vivarais,* the modern *Ardèche;* for I was now come within a little way of my strange destination, the Trappist monastery of our *Lady of the Snows.* The sun came out as I left the shelter of a pine wood, and I beheld suddenly a fine wild landscape to the south. High, rocky hills, as blue as sapphire, closed the view, and between these lay ridge upon ridge, heathery, craggy, the sun glittering on veins of rock, the underwood clambering in hollows, as rude as God made them at the first. There was not a sign of man's hand in all the prospect; and indeed not a trace of his passage, save where generation after generation had walked in twisted footpaths, in and out among the beeches, and up and down upon the channeled slopes. The mists, which had hitherto beset me, were now broken into clouds, and fled swiftly and shone brightly in the sun. I drew a long breath. It was grateful to come, after so long, upon a scene of some attraction for the human heart. I own I like definite form in what my eyes are to rest upon; and if landscapes were sold, like the sheets of characters of my boyhood, one penny plain and twopence colored, I should go the length of twopence every day of my life.

But if things had grown better to the south, it was still desolate and inclement near at hand. A spidery cross on every hilltop marked the neighborhood of a religious house; and a quarter of a mile beyond, the outlook southward opening out and growing bolder with every step, a white statue of the Virgin at the corner of a young plantation directed the traveler to our *Lady of the Snows.* Here, then, I struck leftward, and pursued my way, driving my secular donkey before me, and creaking in my secular boots and gaiters, toward the asylum of silence.

I had not gone very far ere the wind brought to me the clanging of a bell, and somehow, I can scarce tell why, my heart sank within me at the sound. I have rarely approached anything with more unaffected terror than the monastery of our *Lady of the Snows.* This it is to have a Protestant education. And suddenly, on turning a corner, fear took hold on me from head to

foot—slavish superstitious fear; and though I did not stop in my advance, yet I went on slowly, like a man who should have passed a bourne unnoticed, and strayed into the country of the dead. For there upon the narrow new-made road, between the stripling pines, was a medieval friar, fighting with a barrowful of turfs. Every *Sunday* of my childhood I used to study the *Hermits of Marco Sadeler*—enchanting prints, full of wood and field and medieval landscapes, as large as a county, for the imagination to go a traveling in; and here, sure enough, was one of *Marco Sadeler's* heroes. He was robed in white like any specter, and the hood falling back, in the instancy of his contention with the barrow, disclosed a pate as bald and yellow as a skull. He might have been buried any time these thousand years, and all the lively parts of him resolved into earth and broken up with the farmer's harrow.

I was troubled besides in my mind as to etiquette. Durst I address a person who was under a vow of silence? Clearly not. But drawing near, I doffed my cap to him with a faraway superstitious reverence. He nodded back, and cheerfully addressed me. Was I going to the monastery? Who was I? An Englishman? Ah, an Irishman, then?

"No," I said, "a Scotsman."

A Scotsman? Ah, he had never seen a Scotsman before. And he looked me all over, his good, honest, brawny countenance shining with interest, as a boy might look upon a lion or an alligator. From him I learned with disgust that I could not be received at our *Lady of the Snows;* I might get a meal, perhaps, but that was all. And then as our talk ran on, and it turned out that I was not a pedler, but a literary man, who drew landscapes and was going to write a book, he changed his manner of thinking as to my reception (for I fear they respect persons even in a Trappist monastery), and told me I must be sure to ask for the Father Prior, and state my case to him in full. On second thoughts he determined to go down with me himself; he thought he could manage for me better. Might he say that I was a geographer?

No; I thought, in the interests of truth, he positively might not.

"Very well, then" (with disappointment), "an author."

It appeared he had been in a seminary with six young Irishmen, all priests long since, who had received newspapers and kept him informed of the state of ecclesiastical affairs in England. And he asked me eagerly after *Dr. Pusey,* for whose conversion the good man had continued ever since to pray night and morning.

"I thought he was very near the truth," he said; "and he will reach it yet; there is so much virtue in prayer."

He must be a stiff ungodly Protestant who can take anything but pleasure in this kind and hopeful story. While he was thus near the subject, the good father asked me if I were a Christian; and when he found I was not, or not after his way, he glossed it over with great good will.

The road which we were following, and which this stalwart father had made with his own two hands within the space of a year, came to a corner, and showed us some white buildings a little further on beyond the wood. At the same time, the bell once more sounded abroad. We were hard upon the monastery. *Father Apollinaris* (for that was my companion's name) stopped me.

"I must not speak to you down there," he said. "Ask for the Brother Porter, and all will be well. But try to see me as you go out again through the wood, where I may speak to you. I am charmed to have made your acquaintance."

And then suddenly raising his arms, flapping his fingers, and crying out twice, "I must not speak, I must not speak!" he ran away in front of me, and disappeared into the monastery door.

I own this somewhat ghastly eccentricity went a good way to revive my terrors. But where one was so good and simple, why should not all be alike? I took heart of grace, and went forward to the gate as fast as *Modestine,* who seemed to have a disaffection for monasteries, would permit. It was the first door, in my acquaintance of her, which she had not shown an indecent haste to enter. I

summoned the place in form, though with a quaking heart. *Father Michael,* the Father Hospitaler, and a pair of brown-robed brothers came to the gate and spoke with me a while. I think my sack was the great attraction; it had already beguiled the heart of poor *Apollinaris,* who had charged me on my life to show it to the Father Prior. But whether it was my address, or the sack, or the idea speedily published among that part of the brotherhood who attend on strangers that I was not a pedler after all, I found no difficulty as to my reception. *Modestine* was led away by a layman to the stables, and I and my pack were received into our *Lady of the Snows.*

OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS

THE MONKS

FATHER MICHAEL, a pleasant, fresh-faced, smiling man, perhaps of thirty-five, took me to the pantry, and gave me a glass of liqueur to stay me until dinner. We had some talk, or rather I should say he listened to my prattle indulgently enough, but with an abstracted air, like a spirit with a thing of clay. And truly when I remember that I descanted principally on my appetite, and that it must have been by that time more than eighteen hours since *Father Michael* had so much as broken bread, I can well understand that he would find an earthly savor in my conversation. But his manner, though superior, was exquisitely gracious; and I find I have a lurking curiosity as to *Father Michael's* past.

The whet administered, I was left alone for a little in the monastery garden. This is no more than the main court, laid out in sandy paths and beds of party-colored dahlias, and with a fountain and a black statue of the Virgin in the center. The buildings stand around it four-square, bleak, as yet unseasoned by the years and weather, and with no other features than a belfry and a pair of slated gables. Brothers in white, brothers in brown, passed silently along the sanded alleys; and when I first came out, three hooded monks were kneeling on the terrace at their prayers. A naked hill commands the monastery upon one side, and the wood commands it on the other. It lies exposed to wind; the snow falls off and on from *October* to *May,* and sometimes lies six weeks on end; but if they stood in *Eden,* with a climate like heaven's, the buildings themselves would offer the same wintry and cheerless aspect; and for my part, on this wild *September* day, before I was called to dinner, I felt chilly in and out.

When I had eaten well and heartily, *Brother Ambrose,*

a hearty conversable Frenchman (for all those who wait on strangers have the liberty to speak), led me to a little room in that part of the building which is set apart for *MM. les retraitants.* It was clean and whitewashed, and furnished with strict necessaries, a crucifix, a bust of the late Pope, the *Imitation* in French, a book of religious meditations, and the life of *Elizabeth Seton,* evangelist, it would appear, of *North America* and of *New England* in particular. As far as my experience goes, there is a fair field for some more evangelization in these quarters; but think of *Cotton Mather!* I should like to give him a reading of this little work in heaven, where I hope he dwells; but perhaps he knows all that already, and much more; and perhaps he and *Mrs. Seton* are the dearest friends, and gladly unite their voices in the everlasting psalm. Over the table to conclude the inventory of the room, hung a set of regulations for *MM. les retraitants:* what services they should attend, when they were to tell their beads or meditate, and when they were to rise and go to rest. At the foot was a notable N. B.: *"Le temps libre est employé à l'examen de conscience, à la confession, à faire de bonnes résolutions,"* etc. To make good resolutions, indeed! You might talk as fruitfully of making the hair grow on your head.

I had scarce explored my niche when *Brother Ambrose* returned. An English boarder, it appeared, would like to speak with me. I professed my willingness, and the friar ushered in a fresh, young little Irishman of fifty, a deacon of the Church, arrayed in strict canonicals, and wearing on his head what, in default of knowledge, I can only call the ecclesiastical shako. He had lived seven years in retreat at a convent of nuns in *Belgium,* and now five at our *Lady of the Snows;* he never saw an English newspaper; he spoke French imperfectly, and had he spoken it like a native, there was not much chance of conversation where he dwelt. With this, he was a man eminently sociable, greedy of news, and simple-minded like a child. If I was pleased to have a guide about the monastery, he was no less delighted to see an English face and hear an English tongue.

He showed me his own room, where he passed his time among breviaries, Hebrew bibles, and the Waverley novels. Thence he led me to the cloisters, into the chapter-house, through the vestry, where the brothers' gowns and broad straw hats were hanging up, each with his religious name upon a board,—names full of legendary suavity and interest, such as *Basil, Hilarion, Raphael,* or *Pacifique;* into the library, where were all the works of *Veuillot* and *Chateaubriand,* and the *Odes et Ballades,* if you please, and even *Molière,* to say nothing of innumerable fathers and a great variety of local and general historians. Thence my good Irishman took me round the workshops, where brothers bake bread, and make cart-wheels, and take photographs; where one superintends a collection of curiosities, and another a gallery of rabbits. For in a Trappist monastery each monk has an occupation of his own choice, apart from his religious duties and the general labors of the house. Each must sing in the choir, if he has a voice and ear, and join in the haymaking if he has a hand to stir; but in his private hours, although he must be occupied, he may be occupied on what he likes. Thus I was told that one brother was engaged with literature; while *Father Apollinaris* busies himself in making roads, and the Abbot employs himself in binding books. It is not so long since this Abbot was consecrated, by the way; and on that occasion, by a special grace, his mother was permitted to enter the chapel and witness the ceremony of consecration. A proud day for her to have a son a mitered abbot; it makes you glad to think they let her in.

In all these journeyings to and fro, many silent fathers and brethren fell in our way. Usually they paid no more regard to our passage than if we had been a cloud; but sometimes the good deacon had a permission to ask of them, and it was granted by a peculiar movement of the hands, almost like that of a dog's paws in swimming, or refused by the usual negative signs, and in either case with lowered eyelids and a certain air of contrition, as of a man who was steering very close to evil.

The monks, by special grace of their Abbot, were still taking two meals a day; but it was already time for their

grand fast, which begins somewhere in *September* and lasts till *Easter,* and during which they eat but once in the twenty-four hours, and that at two in the afternoon, twelve hours after they have begun the toil and vigil of the day. Their meals are scanty, but even of these they eat sparingly; and though each is allowed a small *carafe* of wine, many refrain from this indulgence. Without doubt, the most of mankind grossly overeat themselves; our meals serve not only for support, but as a hearty and natural diversion from the labor of life. Although excess may be hurtful, I should have thought this Trappist regimen defective. And I am astonished, as I look back, at the freshness of face and cheerfulness of manner of all whom I beheld. A happier nor a healthier company I should scarce suppose that I have ever seen. As a matter of fact, on this bleak upland, and with the incessant occupation of the monks, life is of an uncertain tenure, and death no infrequent visitor, at our *Lady of the Snows.* This, at least, was what was told me. But if they die easily, they must live healthily in the mean time, for they seemed all firm of flesh and high in color; and the only morbid sign that I could observe, an unusual brilliancy of eye, was one that served rather to increase the general impression of vivacity and strength.

Those with whom I spoke were singularly sweet-tempered, with what I can only call a holy cheerfulness in air and conversation. There is a note, in the direction to visitors, telling them not to be offended at the curt speech of those who wait upon them, since it is proper to monks to speak little. The note might have been spared; to a man the hospitalers were all brimming with innocent talk, and, in my experience of the monastery, it was easier to begin than to break off a conversation. With the exception of *Father Michael,* who was a man of the world, they showed themselves full of kind and healthy interest in all sorts of subjects—in politics, in voyages, in my sleeping-sack—and not without a certain pleasure in the sound of their own voices.

As for those who are restricted to silence, I can only wonder how they bear their solemn and cheerless isolation.

And yet, apart from any view of mortification, I can see a certain policy, not only in the exclusion of women, but in this vow of silence. I have had some experience of lay phalansteries, of an artistic, not to say a bacchanalian, character; and seen more than one association easily formed and yet more easily dispersed. With a Cistercian rule, perhaps they might have lasted longer. In the neighborhood of women it is but a touch-and-go association that can be formed among defenseless men; the stronger electricity is sure to triumph; the dreams of boyhood, the schemes of youth, are abandoned after an interview of ten minutes, and the arts and sciences, and professional male jollity, deserted at once for two sweet eyes and a caressing accent. And next after this, the tongue is the great divider.

I am almost ashamed to pursue this worldly criticism of a religious rule; but there is yet another point in which the Trappist order appeals to me as a model of wisdom. By two in the morning the clapper goes upon the bell, and so on, hour by hour, and sometimes quarter by quarter, till eight, the hour of rest; so infinitesimally is the day divided among different occupations. The man who keeps rabbits, for example, hurries from his hutches to the chapel, the chapter-room, or the refectory, all day long: every hour he has an office to sing, a duty to perform; from two, when he rises in the dark, till eight, when he returns to receive the comfortable gift of sleep, he is upon his feet and occupied with manifold and changing business. I know many persons, worth several thousands in the year, who are not so fortunate in the disposal of their lives. Into how many houses would not the note of the monastery-bell, dividing the day into manageable portions, bring peace of mind and healthful activity of body? We speak of hardships, but the true hardship is to be a dull fool, and permitted to mismanage life in our own dull and foolish manner.

From this point of view, we may perhaps better understand the monk's existence. A long novitiate, and every proof of constancy of mind and strength of body is required before admission to the order; but I could not find

that many were discouraged. In the photographer's studio, which figures so strangely among the outbuildings, my eye was attracted by the portrait of a young fellow in the uniform of a private of foot. This was one of the novices, who came of the age for service, and marched and drilled and mounted guard for the proper time among the garrison of *Algiers.* Here was a man who had surely seen both sides of life before deciding; yet as soon as he was set free from service he returned to finish his novitiate.

This austere rule entitles a man to heaven as by right. When the Trappist sickens, he quits not his habit; he lies in the bed of death as he has prayed and labored in his frugal and silent existence; and when the Liberator comes, at the very moment, even before they have carried him in his robe to lie his little last in the chapel among continual chantings, joy-bells break forth, as if for a marriage, from the slated belfry, and proclaim throughout the neighborhood that another soul has gone to God.

At night, under the conduct of my kind Irishman, I took my place in the gallery to hear complin and *Salve Regina,* with which the Cistercians bring every day to a conclusion. There were none of those circumstances which strike the Protestant as childish or as tawdry in the public offices of *Rome.* A stern simplicity, heightened by the romance of the surroundings, spoke directly to the heart. I recall the whitewashed chapel, the hooded figures in the choir, the lights alternately occluded and revealed, the strong manly singing, the silence that ensued, the sight of cowled heads bowed in prayer, and then the clear trenchant beating of the bell, breaking in to show that the last office was over and the hour of sleep had come; and when I remember, I am not surprised that I made my escape into the court with somewhat whirling fancies, and stood like a man bewildered in the windy starry night.

But I was weary; and when I had quieted my spirits with *Elizabeth Seton's* memoirs—a dull work—the cold and the raving of the wind among the pines—for my room was on that side of the monastery which adjoins the woods—disposed me readily to slumber. I was wakened at black midnight, as it seemed, though it was really two

in the morning, by the first stroke upon the bell. All the brothers were then hurrying to the chapel; the dead in life, at this untimely hour, were already beginning the uncomforted labors of their day. The dead in life—there was a chill reflection. And the words of a French song came back into my memory, telling of the best of our mixed existence:

"Que t'as de belles filles,
Giroflé!
Girofla!
Que t'as de belles filles,
L'Amour les comptera!"

And I blessed God that I was free to wander, free to hope, and free to love.

OUR LADY OF THE SNOWS

THE BOARDERS

BUT there was another side to my residence at our *Lady of the Snows.* At this late season there were not many boarders; and yet I was not alone in the public part of the monastery. This itself is hard by the gate, with a small dining-room on the ground floor, and a whole corridor of cells similar to mine upstairs. I have stupidly forgotten the board for a regular *retraitant;* but it was somewhere between three and five francs a day, and I think most probably the first. Chance visitors like myself might give what they chose as a free-will offering, but nothing was demanded. I may mention that when I was going away, *Father Michael* refused twenty francs as excessive. I explained the reasoning which led me to offer him so much; but even then, from a curious point of honor, he would not accept it with his own hand. "I have no right to refuse for the monastery," he explained, "but I should prefer if you would give it to one of the brothers."

I had dined alone, because I arrived late; but at supper I found two other guests. One was a country parish priest, who had walked over that morning from the seat of his cure near *Mende* to enjoy four days of solitude and prayer. He was a grenadier in person, with the hale color and circular wrinkles of a peasant; and as he complained much of how he had been impeded by his skirts upon the march, I have a vivid fancy portrait of him, striding along, upright, big-boned, with kilted cassock, through the bleak hills of *Gévaudan.* The other was a short, grizzling, thick-set man, from forty-five to fifty, dressed in tweed with a knitted spencer, and the red ribbon of a decoration in his buttonhole. This last was a hard person to classify. He was an old soldier, who had seen service and risen to the rank of commandant; and he retained

some of the brisk decisive manners of the camp. On the other hand, as soon as his resignation was accepted, he had come to our *Lady of the Snows* as a boarder, and, after a brief experience of its ways, had decided to remain as a novice. Already the new life was beginning to modify his appearance; already he had acquired somewhat of the quiet and smiling air of the brethren; and he was as yet neither an officer nor a Trappist, but partook of the character of each. And certainly here was a man in an interesting nick of life. Out of the noise of cannon and trumpets, he was in the act of passing into this still country bordering on the grave, where men sleep nightly in their grave-clothes, and, like fantoms, communicate by signs.

At supper we talked politics. I make it my business, when I am in *France,* to preach political good-will and moderation, and to dwell on the example of *Poland,* much as some alarmists in *England* dwell on the example of *Carthage.* The priest and the Commandant assured me of their sympathy with all I said, and made a heavy sighing over the bitterness of contemporary feeling.

"Why, you can not say anything to a man with which he does not absolutely agree," said I, "but he flies up at you in a temper."

They both declared that such a state of things was antichristian.

While we were thus agreeing, what should my tongue stumble upon but a word in praise of *Gambetta's* moderation. The old soldier's countenance was instantly suffused with blood; with the palms of his hands he beat the table like a naughty child.

"Comment, monsieur?" he shouted. *Comment? Gambetta* moderate? Will you dare to justify these words?"

But the priest had not forgotten the tenor of our talk. And suddenly, in the height of his fury, the old soldier found a warning look directed on his face; the absurdity of his behavior was brought home to him in a flash; and the storm came to an abrupt end, without another word.

It was only in the morning, over our coffee (*Friday,*

September 27th), that this couple found out I was a heretic. I suppose I had misled them by some admiring expressions as to the monastic life around us; and it was only by a pointblank question that the truth came out. I had been tolerantly used, both by simple *Father Apollinaris* and astute *Father Michael;* and the good Irish deacon, when he heard of my religious weakness, had only patted me upon the shoulder and said, "You must be a Catholic and come to heaven." But I was now among a different sect of orthodox. These two men were bitter and upright and narrow, like the worst Scotsmen, and indeed, upon my heart, I fancy they were worse. The priest snorted aloud like a battle horse.

"Et vous prétendez mourir dans cette espèce de croyance?" he demanded; and there is no type used by mortal printers large enough to qualify his accent.

I humbly indicated that I had no design of changing.

But he could not away with such a monstrous attitude. "No, no," he cried; "you must change. You have come here, God has led you here, and you must embrace the opportunity."

I made a slip in policy; I appealed to the family affections, though I was speaking to a priest and a soldier, two classes of men circumstantially divorced from the kind and homely ties of life.

"Your father and mother?" cried the priest. "Very well; you will convert them in their turn when you go home."

I think I see my father's face! I would rather tackle the Gætulian lion in his den than embark on such an enterprise against the family theologian.

But now the hunt was up; priest and soldier were in full cry for my conversion; and the Work of the Propagation of the Faith, for which the people of *Cheylard* subscribed forty-eight francs ten centimes during 1877, was being gallantly pursued against myself. It was an odd but most effective proselytizing. They never sought to convince me in argument, where I might have attempted some defense; but took it for granted that I was both ashamed and terrified at my position, and urged me solely on the

point of time. Now, they said, when God had led me to our *Lady of the Snows,* now was the appointed hour.

"Do not be withheld by false shame," observed the priest, for my encouragement.

For one who feels very similarly to all sects of religion, and who has never been able, even for a moment, to weigh seriously the merit of this or that creed on the eternal side of things, however much he may see to praise or blame upon the secular and temporal side, the situation thus created was both unfair and painful. I committed my second fault in tact, and tried to plead that it was all the same thing in the end, and we were all drawing near by different sides to the same kind and indiscriminating Friend and Father. That, as it seems to lay-spirits, would be the only gospel worthy of the name. But different men think differently; and this revolutionary aspiration brought down the priest with all the terrors of the law. He launched into harrowing details of hell. The damned, he said—on the authority of a little book which he had read not a week before, and which, to add conviction to conviction, he had fully intended to bring along with him in his pocket—were to occupy the same attitude through all eternity in the midst of dismal tortures. And as he thus expatiated, he grew in nobility of aspect with his enthusiasm.

As a result the pair concluded that I should seek out the Prior, since the Abbot was from home, and lay my case immediately before him.

"C'est mon conseil comme ancien militaire," observed the Commandant; *"et celui de monsieur comme prêtre."*

"Oui," added the *curé,* sententiously nodding; *"comme ancien militaire—et comme prêtre."*

At this moment, whilst I was somewhat embarrassed how to answer, in came one of the monks, a little brown fellow, as lively as a grig, and with an Italian accent, who threw himself at once into the contention, but in a milder and more persuasive vein, as befitted one of these pleasant brethren. Look at *him,* he said. The rule was very hard; he would have dearly liked to stay in his own country, *Italy*—it was well known how beautiful it was, the beauti-

ful *Italy;* but then there were no Trappists in *Italy;* and he had a soul to save; and here he was.

I am afraid I must be at bottom, what a cheerful Indian critic has dubbed me, "a faddling hedonist"; for this description of the brother's motives gave me somewhat of a shock. I should have preferred to think he had chosen the life for its own sake, and not for ulterior purposes; and this shows how profoundly I was out of sympathy with these good Trappists, even when I was doing my best to sympathize. But to the *curé* the argument seemed decisive.

"Hear that!" he cried. "And I have seen a marquis here, a marquis, a marquis"—he repeated the holy word three times over—"and other persons high in society; and generals. And here, at your side, is this gentleman, who has been so many years in armies—decorated, an old warrior. And here he is, ready to dedicate himself to God."

I was by this time so thoroughly embarrassed that I pleaded cold feet, and made my escape from the apartment. It was a furious windy morning, with a sky much cleared, and long and potent intervals of sunshine; and I wandered until dinner in the wild country toward the east, sorely staggered and beaten upon by the gale, but rewarded with some striking views.

At dinner the Work of the Propagation of the Faith was recommenced, and on this occasion still more distastefully to me. The priest asked me many questions as to the contemptible faith of my fathers, and received my replies with a kind of ecclesiastical titter.

"Your sect," he said once, "for I think you will admit it would be doing it too much honor to call it a religion."

"As you please, monsieur," said I. *"La parole est à vous."*

At length I grew annoyed beyond endurance; and although he was on his own ground, and, what is more to the purpose, an old man, and so holding a claim upon my toleration, I could not avoid a protest against his uncivil usage. He was sadly discountenanced.

"I assure you," he said, "I have no inclination to laugh

in my heart. I have no other feeling but interest in your soul."

And there ended my conversion. Honest man! he was no dangerous deceiver; but a country parson, full of zeal and faith. Long may he tread *Gévaudan* with his kilted skirts—a man strong to walk and strong to comfort his parishioners in death! I dare say he would beat bravely through a snow-storm where his duty called him; and it is not always the most faithful believer who makes the cunningest apostle.

UPPER GÉVAUDAN

ACROSS THE GOULET

"The bed was made, the room was fit,
By punctual eve the stars were lit;
The air was sweet, the water ran;
No need was there for maid or man,
When we put up, my ass and I,
At God's green caravanserai."

—*Old Play.*

THE wind fell during dinner, and the sky remained clear; so it was under better auspices that I loaded *Modestine* before the monastery gate. My Irish friend accompanied me so far on the way. As we came through the wood, there was *Père Apollinaire* hauling his barrow; and he too quitted his labors to go with me for perhaps a hundred yards, holding my hand between both of his in front of him. I parted first from one and then from the other with unfeigned regret, but yet with the glee of the traveler who shakes off the dust of one stage before hurrying forth upon another. Then *Modestine* and I mounted the course of the *Allier,* which here led us back into *Gévaudan* toward its sources in the forest of *Mercoire.* It was but an inconsiderable burn before we left its guidance. Thence, over a hill, our way lay through a naked plateau, until we reached *Chasseradès* at sundown.

The company in the inn kitchen that night were all men employed in survey for one of the projected railways. They were intelligent and conversable, and we decided the future of *France* over hot wine, until the state of the clock frightened us to rest. There were four beds in the little upstairs room; and we slept six. But I had a bed to myself, and persuaded them to leave the window open.

"Hé, bourgeois; il est cinq heures!" was the cry that wakened me in the morning (*Saturday, September 28th*). The room was full of a transparent darkness, which dimly

showed me the other three beds and the five different nightcaps on the pillows. But out of the window the dawn was growing ruddy in a long belt over the hilltops, and day was about to flood the plateau. The hour was inspiriting; and there seemed a promise of calm weather, which was perfectly fulfilled. I was soon under way with *Modestine*. The road lay for a while over the plateau, and then descended through a precipitous village into the valley of the *Chasszac*. This stream ran among green meadows, well hidden from the world by its steep banks; the broom was in flower, and here and there was a hamlet sending up its smoke.

At last the path crossed the *Chassezac* upon a bridge, and, forsaking this deep hollow, set itself to cross the mountain of *La Goulet*. It wound up through *Lestampes* by upland fields and woods of beech and birch, and with every corner brought me into an acquaintance with some new interest. Even in the gully of the *Chassezac* my ear had been struck by a noise like that of a great bass bell ringing at the distance of many miles; but this, as I continued to mount and draw nearer to it, seemed to change in character, and I found at length that it came from some one leading flocks afield to the note of a rural horn. The narrow street of *Lestampes* stood full of sheep, from wall to wall—black sheep and white, bleating like the birds in spring, and each one accompanying himself upon the sheep-bell round his neck. It made a pathetic concert, all in treble. A little higher, and I passed a pair of men in a tree with pruning-hooks, and one of them was singing the music of a *bourrée*. Still further, and when I was already threading the birches, a crowing of cocks came cheerfully up to my ears, and along with that the voice of a flute discoursing a deliberate and plaintive air from one of the upland villages. I pictured to myself some grizzled, apple-cheeked, country schoolmaster fluting in his bit of a garden in the clear autumn sunshine. All these beautiful and interesting sounds filled my heart with an unwonted expectation; and it appeared to me that, once past this range which I was mounting, I should descend into the garden of the world. Nor was I deceived, for I was

now done with rains and winds and a bleak country. The first part of my journey ended here; and this was like an induction of sweet sounds into the other and more beautiful.

There are other degrees of *fey*ness, as of punishment, besides the capital; and I was now led by my good spirits into an adventure which I relate in the interest of future donkey drivers. The road zigzagged so widely on the hillside that I chose a short cut by map and compass, and struck through the dwarf woods to catch the road again upon a higher level. It was my one serious conflict with *Modestine*. She would none of my short cut; she turned in my face, she backed, she reared; she, whom I had hitherto imagined to be dumb, actually brayed with a loud hoarse flourish, like a cock crowing for the dawn. I plied the goad with one hand; with the other, so steep was the ascent, I had to hold on the pack-saddle. Half a dozen times she was nearly over backward on the top of me; half a dozen times, from sheer weariness of spirit, I was nearly giving it up, and leading her down again to follow the road. But I took the thing as a wager, and fought it through. I was surprised, as I went on my way again, by what appeared to be chill rain-drops falling on my hand, and more than once looked up in wonder at the cloudless sky. But it was only sweat which came dropping from my brow.

Over the summit of the *Goulet* there was no marked road—only upright stones posted from space to space to guide the drovers. The turf underfoot was springy and well scented. I had no company but a lark or two, and met but one bullock-cart between *Lestampes* and *Bleymard*. In front of me I saw a shallow valley, and beyond that the range of the *Lozère,* sparsely wooded and well enough modeled in the flanks, but straight and dull in outline. There was scarce a sign of culture; only about *Bleymard,* the white highroad from *Villefort* to *Mende* traversed a range of meadows, set with spiry poplars, and sounding from side to side with the bells of flocks and herds.

UPPER GÉVAUDAN

A NIGHT AMONG THE PINES

FROM *Bleymard* after dinner, although it was already late, I set out to scale a portion of the *Lozère*. An ill-marked stony drove-road guided me forward; and I met nearly half a dozen bullock-carts descending from the woods, each laden with a whole pine-tree for the winter's firing. At the top of the woods, which do not climb very high upon this cold ridge, I struck leftward by a path among the pines, until I hit on a dell of green turf, where a streamlet made a little spout over some stones to serve me for a water-tap. "In a more sacred or sequestered bower—nor nymph nor faunus haunted." The trees were not old, but they grew thickly round the glade: there was no outlook, except northeastward upon distant hilltops, or straight upward to the sky; and the encampment felt secure and private like a room. By the time I made my arrangements and fed *Modestine,* the day was already beginning to decline. I buckled myself to the knees into my sack and made a hearty meal; and as soon as the sun went down, I pulled my cap over my eyes and fell asleep.

Night is a dead monotonous period under a roof; but in the open world it passes lightly, with its stars and dews and perfumes, and the hours are marked by changes in the face of Nature. What seems a kind of temporal death to people choked between walls and curtains, is only a light and living slumber to the man who sleeps afield. All night long he can hear Nature breathing deeply and freely; even as she takes her rest she turns and smiles; and there is one stirring hour unknown to those who dwell in houses, when a wakeful influence goes abroad over the sleeping hemisphere, and all the outdoor world are on their feet. It is then that the cock first crows, not this time to

announce the dawn, but like a cheerful watchman speeding the course of night. Cattle awake on the meadows; sheep break their fast on dewy hillsides, and change to a new lair among the ferns; and houseless men, who have lain down with the fowls, open their dim eyes and behold the beauty of the night.

At what inaudible summons, at what gentle touch of Nature, are all these sleepers thus recalled in the same hour to life? Do the stars rain down an influence, or do we share some thrill of mother earth below our resting bodies? Even shepherds and old country folk, who are the deepest read in these arcana, have not a guess as to the means or purpose of this nightly resurrection. Toward two in the morning they declare the thing takes place; and neither know nor inquire further. And at least it is a pleasant incident. We are disturbed in our slumber only, like the luxurious *Montaigne,* "that we may the better and more sensibly relish it." We have a moment to look upon the stars, and there is a special pleasure for some minds in the reflection that we share the impulse with all outdoor creatures in our neighborhood, that we have escaped out of the *Bastile* of civilization, and are become, for the time being, a mere kindly animal and a sheep of Nature's flock.

When that hour came to me among the pines, I wakened thirsty. My tin was standing by me half full of water. I emptied it at a draft; and feeling broad awake after this internal cold aspersion, sat upright to make a cigarette. The stars were clear, colored, and jewel-like, but not frosty. A faint silvery vapor stood for the Milky Way. All around me the black fir points stood upright and stock-still. By the whiteness of the pack-saddle, I could see *Modestine* walking round and round at the length of her tether; I could hear her steadily munching at the sward; but there was not another sound, save the indescribable quiet talk of the runnel over the stones. I lay lazily smoking and studying the color of the sky, as we call the void of space, from where it showed a reddish gray behind the pines to where it showed a glossy blue-black between the stars. As if to be more like a

pedler, I wear a silver ring. This I could see faintly shining as I raised or lowered the cigarette; and at each whiff the inside of my hand was illuminated, and became for a second the highest light in the landscape.

A faint wind, more like a moving coolness than a stream of air, passed down the glade from time to time; so that even in my great chamber the air was being renewed all night long. I thought with horror of the inn at *Chasseradès* and the congregated nightcaps; with horror of the nocturnal prowesses of clerks and students, of hot theaters and pass-keys and close rooms. I have not often enjoyed a more serene possession of myself, nor felt more independent of material aids. The outer world, from which we cower into our houses, seemed after all a gentle habitable place; and night after night a man's bed, it seemed, was laid and waiting for him in the fields, where God keeps an open house. I thought I had rediscovered one of those truths which are revealed to savages and hid from political economists: at the least, I had discovered a new pleasure for myself. And yet even while I was exulting in my solitude I became aware of a strange lack. I wished a companion to lie near me in the starlight, silent and not moving, but ever within touch. For there is a fellowship more quiet even than solitude, and which, rightly understood, is solitude made perfect. And to live out of doors with the woman a man loves is of all lives the most complete and free.

As I thus lay, between content and longing, a faint noise stole toward me through the pines. I thought, at first, it was the crowing of cocks or the barking of dogs at some very distant farm; but steadily and gradually it took articulate shape in my ears, until I became aware that a passenger was going by upon the highroad in the valley, and singing loudly as he went. There was more of goodwill than grace in his performance; but he trolled with ample lungs; and the sound of his voice took hold upon the hillside and set the air shaking in the leafy glens. I have heard people passing by night in sleeping cities; some of them sang; one, I remember, played loudly on the bagpipes. I have heard the rattle of a cart or carriage

spring up suddenly after hours of stillness, and pass, for some minutes, within the range of my hearing as I lay abed. There is a romance about all who are abroad in the black hours, and with something of a thrill we try to guess their business. But here the romance was double: first, this glad passenger, lit internally with wine, who sent up his voice in music through the night; and then I, on the other hand, buckled into my sack, and smoking alone in the pine woods between four and five thousand feet toward the stars.

When I awoke again (*Sunday, 29th September*), many of the stars had disappeared; only the stronger companions of the night still burned visibly overhead; and away toward the east I saw a faint haze of light upon the horizon, such as had been the Milky Way when I was last awake. Day was at hand. I lit my lantern, and by its glowworm light put on my boots and gaiters; then I broke up some bread for *Modestine,* filled my can at the water-tap, and lit my spirit lamp to boil myself some chocolate. The blue darkness lay long in the glade where I had so sweetly slumbered; but soon there was a broad streak of orange melting into gold along the mountain tops of *Vivarais.* A solemn glee possessed my mind at this gradual and lovely coming in of day. I heard the runnel with delight; I looked round me for something beautiful and unexpected; but the still black pine-trees, the hollow glade, the munching ass, remained unchanged in figure. Nothing had altered but the light, and that, indeed, shed over all a spirit of life and of breathing peace, and moved me to a strange exhilaration.

I drank my water chocolate, which was hot if it was not rich, and strolled here and there, and up and down about the glade. While I was thus delaying, a gush of steady wind, as long as a heavy sigh, poured direct out of the quarter of the morning. It was cold, and set me sneezing. The trees near at hand tossed their black plumes in its passage; and I could see the thin distant spires of pine along the edge of the hill rock slightly to and fro against the golden east. Ten minutes after, the sunlight spread at a gallop along the hillside, scattering

shadows and sparkles, and the day had come completely. I hastened to prepare my pack, and tackle the steep ascent that lay before me; but I had something on my mind. It was only a fancy; yet a fancy will sometimes be importunate. I had been most hospitably received and punctually served in my green caravansary. The room was airy, the water excellent, and the dawn had called me to a moment. I say nothing of the tapestries or the inimitable ceiling, nor yet of the view which I commanded from the windows; but I felt I was in some one's debt for all this liberal entertainment. And so it pleased me, in a half laughing way, to leave pieces of money on the turf as I went along, until I had left enough for my night's lodging. I trust they did not fall to some rich and churlish drover.

THE COUNTRY OF THE CAMISARDS

ACROSS THE LOZÈRE

"We traveled in the print of olden wars;
Yet all the land was green;
And love we found, and peace,
Where fire and war had been.
They pass and smile, the children of the sword—
No more the sword they wield;
And O, how deep the corn
Along the battle-field!"

W. P. BANNATYNE.

THE track that I had followed in the evening soon died out, and I continued to follow over a bald turf ascent a row of stone pillars, such as had conducted me across the *Goulet*. It was already warm. I tied my jacket on the pack, and walked in my knitted waistcoat. *Modestine* herself was in high spirits, and broke of her own accord, for the first time in my experience, into a jolting trot that sent the oats swashing in the pocket of my coat. The view, back upon the northern *Gévaudan,* extended with every step; scarce a tree, scarce a house, appeared upon the fields of wild hill that ran north, east, and west, all blue and gold in the haze and sunlight of the morning. A multitude of little birds kept sweeping and twittering about my path; they perched on the stone pillars, they pecked and strutted on the turf, and I saw them circle in volleys in the blue air, and show, from time to time, translucent flickering wings between the sun and me.

Almost from the first moment of my march, a faint large noise, like a distant surf, had filled my ears. Sometimes I was tempted to think it the voice of a neighboring waterfall, and sometimes a subjective result of the utter stillness of the hill. But as I continued to advance, the noise increased and became like the hissing of an enormous tea urn, and at the same time breaths of cool air began to

reach me from the direction of the summit. At length I understood. It was blowing stiffly from the south upon the other slope of the *Lozère,* and every step that I took was drawing nearer to the wind.

Although it had been long desired, it was quite unexpectedly at last that my eyes rose above the summit. A step that seemed no way more decisive than many other steps that had preceded it—and, "like stout *Cortez* when, with eagle eyes, he stared on the *Pacific,*" I took possession, in my own name, of a new quarter of the world. For behold, instead of the gross turf rampart I had been mounting for so long, a view into the hazy air of heaven, and a land of intricate blue hills below my feet.

The *Lozère* lies nearly east and west, cutting *Gévaudan* into two unequal parts; its highest point, this *Pic de Finiels,* on which I was then standing, rises upward of five thousand six hundred feet above the sea, and in clear weather commands a view over all lower *Languedoc* to the *Mediterranean Sea.* I have spoken with people who either pretended or believed that they had seen, from the *Pic de Finiels,* white ships sailing by *Montpellier* and *Cette.* Behind was the upland northern country through which my way had lain, peopled by a dull race, without wood, without much grandeur of hill-form, and famous in the past for little beside wolves. But in front of me, half-veiled in sunny haze, lay a new *Gévaudan,* rich, picturesque, illustrious for stirring events. Speaking largely, I was in the *Cévennes* at *Monastier,* and during all my journey; but there is a strict and local sense in which only this confused and shaggy country at my feet has any title to the name, and in this sense the peasantry employ the word. These are the *Cévennes* with an emphasis: the *Cévennes* of the *Cévennes.* In that undecipherable labyrinth of hills, a war of bandits, a war of wild beasts, raged for two years between the Grand Monarch with all his troops and marshals on the one hand, and a few thousand Protestant mountaineers upon the other. A hundred and eighty years ago, the Camisards held a station even on the *Lozère,* where I stood; they had an organization, arsenals, a military and religious hierarchy; their affairs were "the

discourse of every coffee-house" in *London; England* sent fleets in their support; their leaders prophesied and murdered; with colors and drums, and the singing of old French psalms, their bands sometimes affronted daylight, marched before walled cities, and dispersed the generals of the king; and sometimes at night, or in masquerade, possessed themselves of strong castles, and avenged treachery upon their allies and cruelty upon their foes. There, a hundred and eighty years ago, was the chivalrous *Roland, "Count* and *Lord Roland,* generalissimo of the Protestants in *France,"* grave, silent, imperious, pock-marked ex-dragoon, whom a lady followed in his wanderings out of love. There was *Cavalier,* a baker's apprentice with a genius for war, elected brigadier of Camisards at seventeen, to die at fifty-five the English governor of *Jersey.* There again was *Castanet,* a partizan leader in a voluminous peruke and with a taste for controversial divinity. Strange generals, who moved apart to take counsel with the God of Hosts, and fled or offered battle, set sentinels or slept in an unguarded camp, as the Spirit whispered to their hearts! And there, to follow these and other leaders, was the rank and file of prophets and disciples, bold, patient, indefatigable, hardy to run upon the mountains, cheering their rough life with psalms, eager to fight, eager to pray, listening devoutly to the oracles of brainsick children, and mystically putting a grain of wheat among the pewter balls with which they charged their muskets.

I had traveled hitherto through a dull district, and in the track of nothing more notable than the child-eating Beast of *Gévaudan,* the *Napoléon Buonaparte* of wolves. But now I was to go down into the scene of a romantic chapter—or, better, a romantic foot-note—in the history of the world. What was left of all this bygone dust and heroism? I was told that Protestantism still survived in this head seat of Protestant resistance; so much the priest himself had told me in the monastery parlor. But I had yet to learn if it were a bare survival, or a lively and generous tradition. Again, if in the northern *Cévennes* the people are narrow in religious judgments, and more filled

with zeal than charity, what was I to look for in this land of persecution and reprisal—in a land where the tyranny of the Church produced the Camisard rebellion, and the terror of the Camisards threw the Catholic peasantry into legalized revolt upon the other side, so that Camisard and Florentin skulked for each other's lives among the mountains?

Just on the brow of the hill, where I paused to look before me, the series of stone pillars came abruptly to an end; and only a little below, a sort of track appeared and began to go down a breakneck slope, turning like a corkscrew as it went. It led into a valley between falling hills, stubbly with rocks like a reaped field of corn, and floored further down with green meadows. I followed the track with precipitation; the steepness of the slope, the continual agile turning of the line of descent, and the old unwearied hope of finding something new in a new country, all conspired to lend me wings. Yet a little lower and a stream began, collecting itself together out of many fountains, and soon making a glad noise among the hills. Sometimes it would cross the track in a bit of waterfall, with a pool, in which *Modestine* refreshed her feet.

The whole descent is like a dream to me, so rapidly was it accomplished. I had scarcely left the summit ere the valley had closed round my path, and the sun beat upon me, walking in a stagnant lowland atmosphere. The track became a road, and went up and down in easy undulations. I passed cabin after cabin, but all seemed deserted; and I saw not a human creature, nor heard any sound except that of the stream. I was, however, in a different country from the day before. The stony skeleton of the world was here vigorously displayed to sun and air. The slopes were steep and changeful. Oak-trees clung along the hills, well grown, wealthy in leaf, and touched by the autumn with strong and luminous colors. Here and there another stream would fall in from the right or the left, down a gorge of snow-white and tumultuary boulders. The river in the bottom (for it was rapidly growing a river, collecting on all hands as it trotted on its way) here foamed a while in desperate rapids,

and there lay in pools of the most enchanting sea-green shot with watery browns. As far as I have gone, I have never seen a river of so changeful and delicate a hue; crystal was not more clear, the meadows were not by half so green; and at every pool I saw I felt a thrill of longing to be out of these hot, dusty, and material garments, and bathe my naked body in the mountain air and water. All the time as I went on I never forgot it was the Sabbath; the stillness was a perpetual reminder; and I heard in spirit the church-bells clamoring all over Europe, and the psalms of a thousand churches.

At length a human sound struck upon my ear—a cry strangely modulated between pathos and derision; and looking across the valley, I saw a little urchin sitting in a meadow, with his hands about his knees, and dwarfed to almost comical smallness by the distance. But the rogue had picked me out as I went down the road, from oak wood on to oak wood, driving *Modestine;* and he made me the compliments of the new country in this tremulous high-pitched salutation. And as all noises are lovely and natural at a sufficient distance, this also, coming through so much clean hill air and crossing all the green valley, sounded pleasant to my ear, and seemed a thing rustic, like the oaks or the river.

A little after, the stream that I was following fell into the *Tarn,* at *Pont de Montvert* of bloody memory.

THE COUNTRY OF THE CAMISARDS

PONT DE MONTVERT

ONE of the first things I encountered in *Pont de Montvert* was, if I remember rightly, the Protestant temple; but this was but the type of other novelties. A subtle atmosphere distinguishes a town in *England* from a town in *France,* or even in *Scotland.* At *Carlisle* you can see you are in one country; at *Dumfries,* thirty miles away, you are as sure that you are in the other. I should find it difficult to tell in what particulars *Pont de Montvert* differed from *Monastier* or *Langogne,* or even *Bleymard;* but the difference existed, and spoke eloquently to the eyes. The place, with its houses, its lanes, its glaring river-bed, wore an indescribable air of the South.

All was *Sunday* bustle in the streets and in the public-house, as all had been Sabbath peace among the mountains. There must have been near a score of us at dinner by eleven before noon; and after I had eaten and drunken, and sat writing up my journal, I suppose as many more came dropping in one after another, or by twos and threes. In crossing the *Lozère* I had not only come among new natural features, but moved into the territory of a different race. These people, as they hurriedly despatched their viands in an intricate sword-play of knives, questioned and answered me with a degree of intelligence which excelled all that I had met, except among the railway folk at *Chasseradès.* They had open, telling faces, and were lively both in speech and manner. They not only entered thoroughly into the spirit of my little trip, but more than one declared, if he were rich enough, he would like to set forth on such another.

Even physically there was a pleasant change. I had not seen a pretty woman since I left *Monastier,* and there but one. Now of the three who sat down with me to

dinner, one was certainly not beautiful—a poor timid thing of forty, quite troubled at this roaring *table d'hôte,* whom I squired and helped to wine, and pledged and tried generally to encourage, with quite a contrary effect; but the other two, both married, were both more handsome than the average of women. And *Clarisse?* What shall I say of *Clarisse?* She waited the table with a heavy placable nonchalance, like a performing cow; her great gray eyes were steeped in amorous languor; her features, although fleshy, were of an original and accurate design; her mouth had a curl; her nostril spoke of dainty pride; her cheek fell into strange and interesting lines. It was a face capable of strong emotion, and, with training, it offered the promise of delicate sentiment. It seemed pitiful to see so good a model left to country admirers and a country way of thought. Beauty should at least have touched society; then, in a moment, it throws off a weight that lay upon it, it becomes conscious of itself, it puts on an elegance, learns a gait and a carriage of the head, and, in a moment, *patet dea.* Before I left I assured *Clarisse* of my hearty admiration. She took it like milk, without embarrassment or wonder, merely looking at me steadily with her great eyes; and I own the result upon myself was some confusion. If *Clarisse* could read English, I should not dare to add that her figure was unworthy of her face. Hers was a case for stays; but that may perhaps grow better as she gets up in years.

Pont de Montvert, or *Greenhill Bridge,* as we might say at home, is a place memorable in the story of the Camisards. It was here that the war broke out; here that those southern Covenanters slew their *Archbishop Sharpe.* The persecution on the one hand, the febrile enthusiasm on the other, are almost equally difficult to understand in these quiet modern days, and with our easy modern beliefs and disbeliefs. The Protestants were one and all beside their right minds with zeal and sorrow. They were all prophets and prophetesses. Children at the breast would exhort their parents to good works. "A child of fifteen months at *Quissac* spoke from its mother's arms, agitated and sobbing, distinctly and with a loud voice." *Marshal*

Villars has seen a town where all the women "seemed possessed by the devil," and had trembling fits, and uttered prophecies publicly upon the streets. A prophetess of *Vivarais* was hanged at *Montpellier* because blood flowed from her eyes and nose, and she declared that she was weeping tears of blood for the misfortunes of the Protestants. And it was not only women and children. Stalwart dangerous fellows, used to swing the sickle or to wield the forest ax, were likewise shaken with strange paroxysms, and spoke oracles with sobs and streaming tears. A persecution unsurpassed in violence had lasted near a score of years, and this was the result upon the persecuted; hanging, burning, breaking on the wheel, had been vain; the dragoons had left their hoof-marks over all the countryside; there were men rowing in the galleys, and women pining in the prisons of the Church; and not a thought was changed in the heart of any upright Protestant.

Now the head and forefront of the persecution—after *Lamoignon de Bavile—François de Langlade du Chayla* (pronounced *Chéïla*), Archpriest of the *Cévennes* and Inspector of Missions in the same country, had a house in which he sometimes dwelt in the town of *Pont de Montvert*. He was a conscientious person, who seems to have been intended by nature for a pirate, and now fifty-five, an age by which a man has learned all the moderation of which he is capable. A missionary in his youth in *China*, he there suffered martyrdom, was left for dead, and only succored and brought back to life by the charity of a pariah. We must suppose the pariah devoid of second sight, and not purposely malicious in this act. Such an experience, it might be thought, would have cured a man of the desire to persecute; but the human spirit is a thing strangely put together; and, having been a Christian martyr, *Du Chayla* became a Christian persecutor. The Work of the Propagation of the Faith went roundly forward in his hands. His house in *Pont de Montvert* served him as a prison. There he plucked out the hairs of the beard, and closed the hands of his prisoners upon live coals, to convince them that they were deceived in their opinions. And yet had not he himself tried and proved the ineffi-

›acy of these carnal arguments among the Buddhists in *China?*

Not only was life made intolerable in *Languedoc,* but flight was rigidly forbidden. One *Massip,* a muleteer, and well acquainted with the mountain paths, had already guided several troops of fugitives in safety to *Geneva;* and on him, with another convoy, consisting mostly of women dressed as men, *Du Chayla,* in an evil hour for himself, laid his hands. The *Sunday* following, there was a conventicle of Protestants in the woods of *Altefage* upon *Mount Bougès;* where there stood up one *Séguier—Spirit Séguier,* as his companions called him—a wool carder, tall, black-faced, and toothless, but a man full of prophecy. He declared, in the name of God, that the time for submission had gone by, and they must betake themselves to arms for the deliverance of their brethren and the destruction of the priests.

The next night, 24th *July,* 1702, a sound disturbed the Inspector of Missions as he sat in his prison-house at *Pont de Montvert;* the voices of many men upraised in psalmody drew nearer and nearer through the town. It was ten at night; he had his court about him, priests, soldiers, and servants, to the number of twelve or fifteen; and now dreading the insolence of a conventicle below his very windows, he ordered forth his soldiers to report. But the psalm singers were already at his door, fifty strong, led by the inspired *Séguier,* and breathing death. To their summons, the archpriest made answer like a stout old persecutor, and bade his garrison fire upon the mob. One Camisard (for, according to some, it was in this night's work that they came by the name) fell at this discharge; his comrades burst in the door with hatchets and a beam of wood, overran the lower story of the house, set free the prisoners, and finding one of them in the *vine,* a sort of *Scavenger's Daughter* of the place and period, redoubled in fury against *Du Chayla,* and sought by repeated assaults to carry the upper floors. But he, on his side, had given absolution to his men, and they bravely held the staircase.

"Children of God," cried the prophet, "hold your

hands. Let us burn the house, with the priest and the satellites of *Baal.*"

The fire caught readily. Out of an upper window *Du Chayla* and his men lowered themselves into the garden by means of knotted sheets; some escaped across the river under the bullets of the insurgents; but the archpriest himself fell, broke his thigh, and could only crawl into the hedge. What were his reflections as this second martyrdom drew near? A poor, brave, besotted, hateful man, who had done his duty resolutely according to his light both in the *Cévennes* and *China.* He found at least one telling word to say in his defense; for when the roof fell in and the upbursting flames discovered his retreat, and they came and dragged him to the public place of the town, raging and calling him damned—"If I be damned," said he, "why should you also damn yourselves?"

Here was a good reason for the last; but in the course of his inspectorship he had given many stronger which all told in a contrary direction; and these he was now to hear. One by one, *Séguier* first, the Camisards drew near and stabbed him. "This," they said, "is for my father broken on the wheel. This for my brother in the galleys. That for my mother or my sister imprisoned in your cursed convents." Each gave his blow and his reason; and then all kneeled and sang psalms around the body till the dawn. With the dawn, still singing, they defiled away toward *Frugères,* further up the *Tarn,* to pursue the work of vengeance, leaving *Du Chayla's* prison-house in ruins, and his body pierced with two-and-fifty wounds upon the public place.

'Tis a wild night's work, with its accompaniment of psalms; and it seems as if a psalm must always have a sound of threatening in that town upon the *Tarn.* But the story does not end, even so far as it concerns *Pont de Montvert,* with the departure of the Camisards. The career of *Séguier* was brief and bloody. Two more priests and a whole family at *Ladevèze,* from the father to the servants, fell by his hand or by his orders; and yet he was but a day or two at large, and restrained all the time by the presence of the soldiery. Taken at length by a famous

soldier of fortune, *Captain Poul,* he appeared unmoved before his judges.

"Your name?" they asked.

"Pierre Séguier."

"Why are you called *Spirit?"*

"Because the Spirit of the Lord is with me."

"Your domicile?"

"Lately in the desert, and soon in heaven."

"Have you no remorse for your crimes?"

"I have committed none. *My soul is like a garden full of shelter and of fountains."*

At *Pont de Montvert,* on the 12th of *August,* he had his right hand stricken from his body, and was burned alive. And his soul was like a garden? So perhaps was the soul of *Du Chayla,* the Christian martyr. And perhaps if you could read in my soul, or I could read in yours, our own composure might seem little less surprising.

Du Chayla's house still stands, with a new roof, beside one of the bridges of the town; and if you are curious you may see the terrace garden into which he dropped.

THE COUNTRY OF THE CAMISARDS

IN THE VALLEY OF THE TARN

A NEW road leads from *Pont de Montvert* to *Florac* by the valley of the *Tarn;* a smooth sandy ledge, it runs about half-way between the summit of the cliffs and the river in the bottom of the valley; and I went in and out, as I followed it from bays of shadow into promontories of afternoon sun. This was a pass like that of *Killiecrankie;* a deep turning gully in the hills, with the *Tarn* making a wonderful hoarse uproar far below, and craggy summits standing in the sunshine high above. A thin fringe of ash-trees ran about the hilltops, like ivy on a ruin; but on the lower slopes, and far up every glen the Spanish chestnut-trees stood each four-square to heaven under its tented foliage. Some were planted each on its own terrace, no larger than a bed; some, trusting in their roots, found strength to grow and prosper and be straight and large upon the rapid slopes of the valleys; others, where there was a margin to the river, stood marshaled in a line and mighty like the cedars of *Lebanon.* Yet even where they grew most thickly they were not to be thought of as a wood, but as a herd of stalwart individuals; and the dome of each tree stood forth separate and large, and as it were a little hill, from among the domes of its companions. They gave forth a faint sweet perfume which pervaded the air of the afternoon; autumn had put tints of gold and tarnish in the green; and the sun so shone through and kindled the broad foliage, that each chestnut was relieved against another, not in shadow, but in light. A humble sketcher here laid down his pencil in despair.

I wish I could convey a notion of the growth of these noble trees; of how they strike out boughs like the oak, and trail sprays of drooping foliage like the willow; of

how they stand on upright fluted columns like the pillars of a church; or like the olive, from the most shattered bole can put out smooth and youthful shoots, and begin a new life upon the ruins of the old. Thus they partake of the nature of many different trees; and even their prickly topknots, seen near at hand against the sky, have a certain palm-like air that impresses the imagination. But their individuality, although compounded of so many elements, is but the richer and the more original. And to look down upon a level filled with these knolls of foliage, or to see a clan of old unconquerable chestnuts cluster "like herded elephants" upon the spur of a mountain, is to rise to higher thoughts of the powers that are in Nature.

Between *Modestine's* laggard humor and the beauty of the scene, we made little progress all that afternoon; and at last finding the sun, although still far from setting, was already beginning to desert the narrow valley of the *Tarn,* I began to cast about for a place to camp in. This was not easy to find; the terraces were too narrow, and the ground, where it was unterraced, was usually too steep for a man to lie upon. I should have slipped all night, and awakened toward morning with my feet or my head in the river.

After perhaps a mile, I saw, some sixty feet above the road, a little plateau large enough to hold my sack, and securely parapeted by the trunk of an aged and enormous chestnut. Thither, with infinite trouble, I goaded and kicked the reluctant *Modestine,* and there I hastened to unload her. There was only room for myself upon the plateau, and I had to go nearly as high again before I found so much as standing room for the ass. It was on a heap of rolling stones, on an artificial terrace, certainly not five feet square in all. Here I tied her to a chestnut, and having given her corn and bread and made a pile of chestnut leaves, of which I found her greedy, I descended once more to my own encampment.

The position was unpleasantly exposed. One or two carts went by upon the road; and as long as daylight lasted I concealed myself, for all the world like a hunted Camisard, behind my fortification of vast chestnut trunk;

for I was passionately afraid of discovery and the visit of jocular persons in the night. Moreover, I saw that I must be early awake; for these chestnut gardens had been the scene of industry no farther gone than on the day before. The slope was strewn with lopped branches, and here and there a great package of leaves was propped against a trunk; for even the leaves are serviceable, and the peasants use them in winter by way of fodder for their animals. I picked a meal in fear and trembling, half lying down to hide myself from the road; and I dare say I was as much concerned as if I had been a scout from *Joani's* band above the *Lozère* or from *Salmon's* across the *Tarn* in the old times of psalm-singing and blood. Or, indeed, perhaps more; for the Camisards had a remarkable confidence in God; and a tale comes back into my memory of how the *Count of Gévaudan,* riding with a party of dragoons and a notary at his saddle-bow to enforce the oath of fidelity in all the country hamlets, entered a valley in the woods, and found *Cavalier* and his men at dinner, gaily seated on the grass, and their hats crowned with box-tree garlands, while fifteen women washed their linen in the stream. Such was a field festival in 1703; at that date *Antony Watteau* would be painting similar subjects.

This was a very different camp from that of the night before in the cool and silent pine woods. It was warm and even stifling in the valley. The shrill song of frogs, like the tremolo note of a whistle with a pea in it, rang up from the riverside before the sun was down. In the growing dusk, faint rustlings began to run to and fro among the fallen leaves; from time to time a faint chirping or cheeping noise would fall upon my ear; and time to time I thought I could see the movement of something swift and indistinct between the chestnuts. A profusion of large ants swarmed upon the ground; bats whisked by, and mosquitoes droned overhead. The long boughs with their bunches of leaves hung against the sky like garlands; and those immediately above and around me had somewhat the air of a trellis which should have been wrecked and half overthrown in a gale of wind.

Sleep for a long time fled my eyelids; and just as I was beginning to feel quiet stealing over my limbs, and settling densely on my mind, a noise at my head startled me broad awake again, and, I will frankly confess it, brought my heart into my mouth. It was such a noise as a person would make scratching loudly with a finger-nail, it came from under the knapsack which served me for a pillow, and it was thrice repeated before I had time to sit up and turn about. Nothing was to be seen, nothing more was to be heard, but a few of these mysterious rustlings far and near, and the ceaseless accompaniment of the river and the frogs. I learned next day that the chestnut gardens are infested by rats; rustling, chirping, and scraping were probably all due to these; but the puzzle, for the moment, was insoluble, and I had to compose myself for sleep, as best I could, in wondering uncertainty about my neighbors.

I was wakened in the gray of the morning (*Monday, 30th September*) by the sound of footsteps not far off upon the stones, and opening my eyes, I beheld a peasant going by among the chestnuts by a footpath that I had not hitherto observed. He turned his head neither to the right nor to the left, and disappeared in a few strides among the foliage. Here was an escape! But it was plainly more than time to be moving. The peasantry were abroad; scarce less terrible to me in my nondescript position than the soldiers of *Captain Poul* to an undaunted Camisard. I fed *Modestine* with what haste I could; but as I was returning to my sack, I saw a man and a boy come down the hillside in a direction crossing mine. They unintelligibly hailed me, and I replied with inarticulate but cheerful sounds, and hurried forward to get into my gaiters.

The pair, who seemed to be father and son, came slowly up to the plateau, and stood close beside me for some time in silence. The bed was open, and I saw with regret my revolver lying patently disclosed on the blue wool. At last, after they had looked me all over, and the silence had grown laughably embarrassing, the man demanded in what seemed unfriendly tones:

"You have slept here?"

"Yes," said I. "As you see."

"Why?" he asked.

"My faith," I answered lightly, "I was tired."

He next inquired where I was going and what I had had for dinner; and then, without the least transition, "*C'est bien,*" he added. "Come along." And he and his son, without another word, turned off to the next chestnut-tree but one, which they set to pruning. The thing had passed off more simply than I hoped. He was a grave, respectable man; and his unfriendly voice did not imply that he thought he was speaking to a criminal, but merely to an inferior.

I was soon on the road, nibbling a cake of chocolate and seriously occupied with a case of conscience. Was I to pay for my night's lodging? I had slept ill, the bed was full of fleas in the shape of ants, there was no water in the room, the very dawn had neglected to call me in the morning. I might have missed a train, had there been any in the neighborhood to catch. Clearly, I was dissatisfied with my entertainment; and I decided I should not pay unless I met a beggar.

The valley looked even lovelier by morning; and soon the road descended to the level of the river. Here, in a place where many straight and prosperous chestnuts stood together, making an aisle upon a swarded terrace, I made my morning toilet in the water of the *Tarn.* It was marvelously clear, thrillingly cool; the soap-suds disappeared as if by magic in the swift current, and the white boulders gave one a model for cleanliness. To wash in one of God's rivers in the open air seems to me a sort of cheerful solemnity or semipagan act of worship. To dabble among dishes in a bedroom may perhaps make clean the body; but the imagination takes no share in such a cleansing. I went on with a light and peaceful heart, and sang psalms to the spiritual ear as I advanced.

Suddenly up came an old woman, who pointblank demanded alms.

"Good!" thought I; "here comes the waiter with the bill."

And I paid for my night's lodging on the spot. Take it how you please, but this was the first and the last beggar that I met with during all my tour.

A step or two farther I was overtaken by an old man in a brown nightcap, clear-eyed, weather-beaten, with a faint, excited smile. A litle girl followed him, driving two sheep and a goat; but she kept in our wake, while the old man walked beside me and talked about the morning and the valley. It was not much past six; and for healthy people who have slept enough, that is an hour of expansion and of open and trustful talk.

"Connaissez-vous le Seigneur?" he said at length.

I asked him what Seigneur he meant; but he only repeated the question with more emphasis and a look in his eyes denoting hope and interest.

"Ah!" said I, pointing upward, "I understand you now. Yes, I know Him; He is the best of acquaintances."

The old man said he was delighted. "Hold," he added, striking his bosom; "it makes me happy here." There were a few who knew the Lord in these valleys, he went on to tell me; not many, but a few. "Many are called," he quoted, "and few chosen."

"My father," said I, "it is not easy to say who know the Lord; and it is none of our business. Protestants and Catholics, and even those who worship stones, may know Him and be known by Him; for He has made all."

I did not know I was so good a preacher.

The old man assured me he thought as I did, and repeated his expressions of pleasure at meeting me. "We are so few," he said. "They call us Moravians here; but down in the department of *Gard,* where there are also a good number, they are called Derbists, after an English pastor."

I began to understand that I was figuring, in questionable taste, as a member of some sect to me unknown; but I was more pleased with the pleasure of my companion than embarrassed by my own equivocal position. Indeed I can see no dishonesty in not avowing a difference; and especially in these high matters, where we have all a sufficient assurance that, whoever may be in the wrong, we ourselves

are not completely in the right. The truth is much talked about; but this old man in a brown nightcap showed himself so simple, sweet, and friendly that I am not unwilling to profess myself his convert. He was, as a matter of fact, a Plymouth Brother. Of what that involves in the way of doctrine I have no idea nor the time to inform myself; but I know right well that we are all embarked upon a troublesome world, the children of one Father, striving in many essential points to do and to become the same. And although it was somewhat in a mistake that he shook hands with me so often and showed himself so ready to receive my words, that was a mistake of the truth-finding sort. For charity begins blindfold; and only through a series of similar misapprehensions rises at length into a settled principle of love and patience, and a firm belief in all our fellow men. If I deceived this good old man, in the like manner I would willingly go on to deceive others. And if ever at length, out of our separate and sad ways, we should all come together into one common house, I have a hope, to which I cling dearly, that my mountain Plymouth Brother will hasten to shake hands with me again.

Thus, talking like *Christian* and *Faithful* by the way, he and I came down upon a hamlet by the *Tarn*. It was but a humble place, called *La Vernède,* with less than a dozen houses, and a Protestant chapel on a knoll. Here he dwelt; and here, at the inn, I ordered my breakfast. The inn was kept by an agreeable young man, a stone breaker on the road, and his sister, a pretty and engaging girl. The village schoolmaster dropped in to speak with the stranger. And these were all Protestants—a fact which pleased me more than I should have expected; and, what pleased me still more, they seemed all upright and simple people. The Plymouth Brother hung round me with a sort of yearning interest, and returned at least thrice to make sure I was enjoying my meal. His behavior touched me deeply at the time, and even now moves me in recollection. He feared to intrude, but he would not willingly forego one moment of my society; and he seemed never weary of shaking me by the hand.

When all the rest had drifted off to their day's work, I sat for near half an hour with the young mistress of the house, who talked pleasantly over her seam of the chestnut harvest, and the beauties of the *Tarn,* and old family affections, broken up when young folk go from home, yet still subsisting. Hers, I am sure, was a sweet nature, with a country plainness and much delicacy underneath; and he who takes her to his heart will doubtless be a fortunate young man.

The valley below *La Vernède* pleased me more and more as I went forward. Now the hills approached from either hand, naked and crumbling, and walled in the river between cliffs; and now the valley widened and became green. The road led me past the old castle of *Miral* on a steep; past a battlemented monastery, long since broken up and turned into a church and parsonage; and past a cluster of black roofs, the village of *Cocurès,* sitting among vineyards and meadows and orchards thick with red apples, and where, along the highway, they were knocking down walnuts from the roadside trees, and gathering them in sacks and baskets. The hills, however much the vale might open, were still tall and bare, with cliffy battlements and here and there a pointed summit; and the *Tarn* still rattled through the stones with a mountain noise. I had been led, by bagmen of a picturesque turn of mind, to expect a horrific country after the heart of *Byron;* but to my Scotch eyes it seemed smiling and plentiful, as the weather still gave an impression of high summer to my Scotch body; although the chestnuts were already picked out by the autumn, and the poplars, that here began to mingle with them, had turned into pale gold against the approach of winter.

There was something in this landscape, smiling although wild, that explained to me the spirit of the Southern Covenanters. Those who took to the hills for conscience' sake in *Scotland* had all gloomy and bedeviled thoughts; for once that they received God's comfort they would be twice engaged with Satan; but the Camisards had only bright and supporting visions. They dealt much more in blood, both given and taken; yet I find no obsession of the Evil

One in their records. With a light conscience, they pursued their life in these rough times and circumstances. The soul of *Séguier,* let us not forget, was like a garden. They knew they were on God's side, with a knowledge that has no parallel among the Scots; for the Scots, although they might be certain of the cause, could never rest confident of the person.

"We flew," says one old Camisard, "when we heard the sound of psalm-singing, we flew as if with wings. We felt within us an animating ardor, a transporting desire. The feeling can not be expressed in words. It is a thing that must have been experienced to be understood. However weary we might be, we thought no more of our weariness and grew light, so soon as the psalms fell upon our ears."

The valley of the *Tarn* and the people whom I met at *La Vernède* not only explain to me this passage, but the twenty years of suffering which those, who were so stiff and so bloody when once they betook themselves to war, endured with the meekness of children and the constancy of saints and peasants.

THE COUNTRY OF THE CAMISARDS

FLORAC

ON A BRANCH of the *Tarn* stands *Florac*, the seat of a subprefecture, with an old castle, an alley of planes, many quaint street corners, and a live fountain welling from the hill. It is notable, besides, for handsome women, and as one of the two capitals, *Alais* being the other, of the country of the Camisards.

The landlord of the inn took me, after I had eaten, to an adjoining *café*, where I, or rather my journey, became the topic of the afternoon. Every one had some suggestion for my guidance; and the subprefectorial map was fetched from the subprefecture itself, and much thumbed among coffee-cups and glasses of liqueur. Most of these kind advisers were Protestant, though I observed that Protestant and Catholic intermingled in a very easy manner; and it surprised me to see what a lively memory still subsisted of the religious war. Among the hills of the southwest, by *Mauchline*, *Cumnock*, or *Carsphairn*, in isolated farms or in the manse, serious Presbyterian people still recall the days of the great persecution, and the graves of local martyrs are still piously regarded. But in towns and among the so-called better classes, I fear that these old doings have become an idle tale. If you met a mixed company in the King's Arms at *Wigtown*, it is not likely that the talk would run on Covenanters. Nay, at *Muirkirk* of *Glenluce*, I found the beadle's wife had not so much as heard of *Prophet Peden*. But these Cévenols were proud of their ancestors in quite another sense; the war was their chosen topic; its exploits were their own patent of nobility; and where a man or a race has had but one adventure, and that heroic, we must expect and pardon some prolixity of reference. They told me the country was still full of legends hitherto uncollected;

I heard from them about *Cavalier's* descendants—not direct descendants, be it understood, but only cousins or nephews—who were still prosperous people in the scene of the boy general's exploits; and one farmer had seen the bones of old combatants dug up into the air of an afternoon in the nineteenth century, in a field where the ancestors had fought, and the great-grandchildren were peaceably ditching.

Later in the day one of the Protestant pastors was so good as to visit me: a young man, intelligent and polite, with whom I passed an hour or two in talk. *Florac,* he told me, is part Protestant, part Catholic; and the difference in religion is usually doubled by a difference in politics. You may judge of my surprise, coming as I did from such a babbling purgatorial *Poland* of a place as *Monastier,* when I learned that the population lived together on very quiet terms; and there was even an exchange of hospitalities between households thus doubly separated. Black Camisard and White Camisard, militiaman and Miquelet and dragoon, Protestant prophet and Catholic cadet of the White Cross, they had all been sabering and shooting, burning, pillaging and murdering, their hearts hot with indignant passion; and here, after a hundred and seventy years, Protestant is still Protestant, Catholic still Catholic, in mutual toleration and mild amity of life. But the race of man, like that indomitable nature whence it sprang, has medicating virtues of its own; the years and seasons bring various harvests; the sun returns after the rain; and mankind outlives secular animosities, as a single man awakens from the passions of a day. We judge our ancestors from a more divine position; and the dust being a little laid with several centuries, we can see both sides adorned with human virtues and fighting with a show of right.

I have never thought it easy to be just, and find it daily even harder than I thought. I own I met these Protestants with delight and a sense of coming home. I was accustomed to speak their language, in another and deeper sense of the word than that which distinguishes between French and English; for the true babel is a divergence

upon morals. And hence I could hold more free communication with the Protestants, and judge them more justly, than the Catholics. *Father Apollinaris* may pair off with my mountain Plymouth Brother as two guileless and devout old men; yet I ask myself if I had as ready a feeling for the virtues of the Trappist; or had I been a Catholic, if I should have felt so warmly to the dissenter of *La Vernède*. With the first I was on terms of mere forbearance; but with the other, although only on a misunderstanding and by keeping on selected points, it was still possible to hold converse and exchange some honest thoughts. In this world of imperfection we gladly welcome even partial intimacies. If we find but one to whom we can speak out of our heart freely, with whom we can walk in love and simplicity without dissimulation, we have no ground of quarrel with the world or God.

THE COUNTRY OF THE CAMISARDS

IN THE VALLEY OF THE MIMENTE

ON TUESDAY, 1*st October,* we left *Florac* late in the afternoon, a tired donkey and tired donkey driver. A little way up the *Tarnon,* a covered bridge of wood introduced us into the valley of the *Mimente.* Steep rocky red mountains overhung the stream; great oaks and chestnuts grew upon the slopes or in stony terraces; here and there was a red field of millet or a few apple-trees studded with red apples; and the road passed hard by two black hamlets, one with an old castle atop to please the heart of the tourist.

It was difficult here again to find a spot fit for my encampment. Even under the oaks and chestnuts the ground had not only a very rapid slope, but was heaped with loose stones; and where there was no timber the hills descended to the stream in a red precipice tufted with heather. The sun had left the highest peak in front of me, and the valley was full of the lowing sound of herdsmen's horns as they recalled the flocks into the stable, when I spied a bight of meadow some way below the roadway in an angle of the river. Thither I descended, and, tying *Modestine* provisionally to a tree, proceeded to investigate the neighborhood. A gray pearly evening shadow filled the glen; objects at a little distance grew indistinct and melted bafflingly into each other; and the darkness was rising steadily like an exhalation. I approached a great oak which grew in the meadow, hard by the river's brink; when to my disgust the voices of children fell upon my ear, and I beheld a house round the angle on the other bank. I had half a mind to pack and be gone again, but the growing darkness moved me to remain. I had only to make no noise until the night was fairly come, and trust to the dawn to call me early in the

morning. But it was hard to be annoyed by neighbors in such a great hotel.

A hollow underneath the oak was my bed. Before I had fed *Modestine* and arranged my sack, three stars were already brightly shining, and the others were beginning dimly to appear. I slipped down to the river, which looked very black among its rocks, to fill my can; and dined with a good appetite in the dark, for I scrupled to light a lantern while so near a house. The moon, which I had seen a pallid crescent, all afternoon, faintly illuminated the summit of the hills, but not a ray fell into the bottom of the glen where I was lying. The oak rose before me like a pillar of darkness; and overhead the heartsome stars were set in the face of the night. No one knows the stars who has not slept, as the French happily put it, *à la belle étoile.* He may know all their names and distances and magnitudes, and yet be ignorant of what alone concerns mankind, their serene and gladsome influence on the mind. The greater part of poetry is about the stars; and very justly, for they are themselves the most classical of poets. These same far-away worlds, sprinkled like tapers or shaken together like a diamond dust upon the sky, had looked not otherwise to *Roland* or *Cavalier,* when, in the words of the latter, they had "no other tent but the sky, and no other bed than my mother earth."

All night a strong wind blew up the valley, and the acorns fell pattering over me from the oak. Yet, on this first night of *October,* the air was as mild as *May,* and I slept with the fur thrown back.

I was much disturbed by the barking of a dog, an animal that I fear more than any wolf. A dog is vastly braver, and is besides supported by the sense of duty. If you kill a wolf, you meet with encouragement and praise; but if you kill a dog, the sacred rights of property and the domestic affections come clamoring round you for redress. At the end of a fagging day, the sharp, cruel note of a dog's bark is in itself a keen annoyance; and to a tramp like myself, he represents the sedentary and respectable world in its most hostile form. There is something of the clergyman or the lawyer about this engaging animal; and

if he were not amenable to stones, the boldest man would shrink from traveling afoot. I respect dogs much in the domestic circle; but on the highway or sleeping afield, I both detest and fear them.

I was awakened next morning (*Wednesday, October 2d*) by the same dog—for I knew his bark—making a charge down the bank, and then, seeing me sit up, retreating again with great alacrity. The stars were not yet quite extinguished. The heaven was of that enchanting mild gray-blue of the early morn. A still clear light began to fall, and the trees on the hillside were outlined sharply against the sky. The wind had veered more to the north, and no longer reached me in the glen; but as I was going on with my preparations, it drove a white cloud very swiftly over the hilltop; and looking up, I was surprised to see the cloud dyed with gold. In these high regions of the air, the sun was already shining as at noon. If only the clouds traveled high enough, we should see the same thing all night long. For it is always daylight in the fields of space.

As I began to go up the valley, a draft of wind came down it out of the seat of the sunrise, although the clouds continued to run overhead in an almost contrary direction. A few steps farther, and I saw a whole hillside gilded with the sun; and still a little beyond, between two peaks, a center of dazzling brilliancy appeared floating in the sky, and I was once more face to face with the big bonfire that occupies the kernel of our system.

I met but one human being that forenoon, a dark military-looking wayfarer, who carried a game-bag on a baldric; but he made a remark that seems worthy of record. For when I asked him if he were Protestant or Catholic—

"Oh," said he, "I make no shame of my religion. I am a Catholic."

He made no shame of it! The phrase is a piece of natural statistics; for it is the language of one in a minority. I thought with a smile of *Bavile* and his dragoons, and how you may ride roughshod over a religion for a century, and leave it only the more lively for the friction. *Ireland* is still Catholic; the *Cévennes* still Prot-

estant. It is not a basketful of law papers, nor the hoofs and pistol butts of a regiment of horse, that can change one tittle of a plowman's thoughts. Outdoor rustic people have not many ideas, but such as they have are hardy plants and thrive flourishingly in persecution. One who has grown a long while in the sweat of laborious noons, and under the stars at night, a frequenter of hills and forests, an old honest countryman, has, in the end, a sense of communion with the powers of the universe, and amicable relations toward his God. Like my mountain Plymouth Brother, he knows the Lord. His religion does not repose upon a choice of logic; it is the poetry of the man's experience, the philosophy of the history of his life. God, like a great power, like a great shining sun, has appeared to this simple fellow in the course of years, and become the ground and essence of his least reflections; and you may change creeds and dogmas by authority, or proclaim a new religion with the sound of trumpets, if you will; but here is a man who has his own thoughts, and will stubbornly adhere to them in good and evil. He is a Catholic, a Protestant, or a Plymouth Brother, in the same indefeasible sense that a man is not a woman, or a woman not a man. For he could not vary from his faith, unless he could eradicate all memory of the past, and, in a strict and not a conventional meaning, change his mind.

THE COUNTRY OF THE CAMISARDS

THE HEART OF THE COUNTRY

I WAS now drawing near to *Cassagnas,* a cluster of black roofs upon the hillside, in this wild valley, among chestnut gardens, and looked upon in the clear air by many rocky peaks. The road along the *Mimente* is yet new, nor have the mountaineers recovered their surprise when the first cart arrived at *Cassagnas.* But although it lay thus apart from the current of men's business, this hamlet had already made a figure in the history of *France.* Hard by, in caverns of the mountain, was one of the five arsenals of the Camisards; where they laid up clothes and corn and arms against necessity, forged bayonets and sabers, and made themselves gunpowder with willow charcoal and saltpeter boiled in kettles. To the same caves, amid this multifarious industry, the sick and wounded were brought up to heal; and there they were visited by the two surgeons, *Chabrier* and *Tavan,* and secretly nursed by women of the neighborhood.

Of the five legions into which the Camisards were divided, it was the oldest and the most obscure that had its magazines by *Cassagnas.* This was the band of *Spirit Séguier;* men who had joined their voices with his in the 68th Psalm as they marched down by night on the archpriest of the *Cévennes. Séguier,* promoted to heaven, was succeeded by *Salomon Couderc,* whom *Cavalier* treats in his memoirs as chaplain-general to the whole army of the Camisards. He was a prophet; a great reader of the heart, who admitted people to the sacrament or refused them by "intentively viewing every man" between the eyes; and had the most of the Scriptures off by rote. And this was surely happy; since in a surprise in August, 1703, he lost his mule, his portfolios, and his Bible. It is only strange that they were not surprised more often and more

effectually; for this legion of *Cassagnas* was truly patriarchal in its theory of war, and camped without sentries, leaving that duty to the angels of the God for whom they fought. This is a token, not only of their faith, but of the trackless country where they harbored. *M. de Caladon,* taking a stroll one fine day, walked without warning into their midst, as he might have walked into "a flock of sheep in a plain," and found some asleep and some awake and psalm-singing. A traitor had need of no recommendation to insinuate himself among their ranks, beyond "his faculty of singing psalms"; and even the prophet *Salomon* "took him into a particular friendship." Thus, among their intricate hills, the rustic troop subsisted; and history can attribute few exploits to them but sacraments and ecstasies.

People of this tough and simple stock will not, as I have just been saying, prove variable in religion; nor will they get nearer to apostasy than a mere external conformity like that of *Naaman* in the house of *Rimmon.* When *Louis XVI.,* in the words of the edict, "convinced by the uselessness of a century of persecutions, and rather from necessity than sympathy," granted at last a royal grace of toleration, *Cassagnas* was still Protestant; and to a man, it is so to this day. There is, indeed, one family that is not Protestant, but neither is it Catholic. It is that of a Catholic *curé* in revolt, who has taken to his bosom a schoolmistress. And his conduct, it's worth noting, is disapproved by the Protestant villagers.

"It is a bad idea for a man," said one, "to go back from his engagements."

The villagers whom I saw seemed intelligent after a countrified fashion, and were all plain and dignified in manner. As a Protestant myself, I was well looked upon, and my acquaintance with history gained me farther respect. For we had something not unlike a religious controversy at table, a gendarme and a merchant with whom I dined being both strangers to the place and Catholics. The young men of the house stood round and supported me: and the whole discussion was tolerantly conducted, and surprised a man brought up among the infinitesimal

and contentious differences of Scotland. The merchant, indeed, grew a little warm, and was far less pleased than some others with my historical acquirements. But the gendarme was mighty easy over it all.

"It's a bad idea for a man to change," said he; and the remark was generally applauded.

That was not the opinion of the priest and soldier at our *Lady of the Snows.* But this is a different race; and perhaps the same great-heartedness that upheld them to resist, now enables them to differ in a kind spirit. For courage respects courage; but where a faith has been trodden out, we may look for a mean and narrow population. The true work of *Bruce* and *Wallace* was the union of the nations; not that they should stand apart a while longer, skirmishing upon their borders; but that, when the time came, they might unite with self-respect.

The merchant was much interested in my journey, and thought it dangerous to sleep afield.

"There are the wolves," said he; "and then it is known you are an Englishman. The English have always long purses, and it might very well enter into some one's head to deal you an ill blow some night."

I told him I was not much afraid of such accidents; and at any rate judged it unwise to dwell upon alarms or consider small perils in the arrangement of life. Life itself, I submitted, was a far too risky business as a whole to make each additional particular of danger worth regard. "Something," said I, "might burst in your inside any day of the week, and there would be an end of you, if you were locked into your room with three turns of the key."

"Cependant," said he, *"coucher dehors!"*

"God," said I, "is everywhere."

"Cependant, coucher dehors!" he repeated, and his voice was eloquent of terror.

He was the only person, in all my voyage, who saw anything hardy in so simple a proceeding; although many considered it superfluous. Only one, on the other hand, professed much delight in the idea; and that was my Plymouth Brother, who cried out, when I told him I sometimes preferred sleeping under the stars to a

close and noisy ale-house, "Now I see that you know the Lord!"

The merchant asked me for one of my cards as I was leaving, for he said I should be something to talk of in the future, and desired me to make a note of his request and reason; a desire with which I have thus complied.

A little after two I struck across the *Mimente,* and took a rugged path southward up a hillside covered with loose stones and tufts of heather. At the top, as is the habit of the country, the path disappeared; and I left my she-ass munching heather, and went forward alone to seek a road.

I was now on the separation of two vast watersheds; behind me all the streams were bound for the *Garonne* and the Western Ocean; before me was the basin of the *Rhone.* Hence, as from the *Lozère,* you can see in clear weather the shining of the *Gulf of Lyons;* and perhaps from here the soldiers of *Salomon* may have watched for the topsails of *Sir Cloudesley Shovel,* and the long-promised aid from *England.* You may take this ridge as lying in the heart of the country of the Camisards; four of the five legions camped all round it and almost within view—*Salomon* and *Joani* to the north, *Castanet* and *Roland* to the south; and when *Julien* had finished his famous work, the devastation of the *High Cévennes,* which lasted all through *October* and *November,* 1703, and during which four hundred and sixty villages and hamlets were, with fire and pickax, utterly subverted, a man standing on this eminence would have looked forth upon a silent, smokeless, and dispeopled land.

Time and man's activity have now repaired these ruins; *Cassagnas* is once more roofed and sending up domestic smoke; and in the chestnut gardens, in low and leafy corners, many a prosperous farmer returns, when the day's work is done, to his children and bright hearth. And still it was perhaps the wildest view of all my journey. Peak upon peak, chain upon chain of hills ran surging southward, channeled and sculptured by the winter streams, feathered from head to foot with chestnuts, and here and there breaking out into a coronal of cliffs. The sun, which was still far from setting, sent a drift of misty

gold across the hilltops, but the valleys were already plunged in a profound and quiet shadow.

A very old shepherd, hobbling on a pair of sticks, and wearing a black cap of liberty, as if in honor of his nearness to the grave, directed me to the road for *St. Germain de Calberte.* There was something solemn in the isolation of this infirm and ancient creature. Where he dwelt, how he got upon this high ridge, or how he proposed to get down again, were more than I could fancy. Not far off upon my right was the famous *Plan de Font Morte,* where *Poul* with his Armenian saber slashed down the Camisards of *Séguier.* This, methought, might be some *Rip Van Winkle* of the war, who had lost his comrades, fleeing before *Poul,* and wandered ever since upon the mountains. It might be news to him that *Cavalier* had surrendered, or *Roland* had fallen fighting with his back against an olive. And while I was thus working on my fancy, I heard him hailing in broken tones, and saw him waving me to come back with one of his two sticks. I had already got some way past him; but, leaving *Modestine* once more, retraced my steps.

Alas, it was a very commonplace affair. The old gentleman had forgot to ask the pedler what he sold, and wished to remedy this neglect.

I told him sternly, "Nothing."

"Nothing?" cried he.

I repeated "Nothing," and made off.

It's odd to think of, but perhaps I thus became as inexplicable to the old man as he had been to me.

The road lay under chestnuts, and though I saw a hamlet or two below me in the vale, and many lone houses of the chestnut farmers, it was a very solitary march all afternoon; and the evening began early underneath the trees. But I heard the voice of a woman singing some sad, old, endless ballad not far off. It seemed to be about love and a *bel amoureux,* her handsome sweetheart; and I wished I could have taken up the strain and answered her, as I went on upon my invisible woodland way, weaving, like *Pippa* in the poem, my own thoughts with hers. What could I have told her? Little enough; and yet all

the heart requires. How the world gives and takes away, and brings sweethearts near, only to separate them again into distant and strange lands; but to love is the great amulet which makes the world a garden; and "hope, which comes to all," outwears the accidents of life, and reaches with tremulous hand beyond the grave and death. Easy to say: yea, but also, by God's mercy, both easy and grateful to believe!

We struck at last into a wide white highroad, carpeted with noiseless dust. The night had come; the moon had been shining for a long while upon the opposite mountain; when on turning a corner my donkey and I issued ourselves into her light. I had emptied out my brandy at *Florac,* for I could bear the stuff no longer, and replaced it with some generous and scented Volnay; and now I drank to the moon's sacred majesty upon the road. It was but a couple of mouthfuls; yet, I became thenceforth unconscious of my limbs, and my blood flowed with luxury. Even *Modestine* was inspired by this purified nocturnal sunshine, and bestirred her little hoofs as to a livelier measure. The road wound and descended swiftly among masses of chestnuts. Hot dust rose from our feet and flowed away. Our two shadows—mine deformed with the knapsack, hers comically bestridden by the pack—now lay before us clearly outlined on the road, and now, as we turned a corner, went off into the ghostly distance, and sailed along the mountain like clouds. From time to time a warm wind rustled down the valley, and set all the chestnuts dangling their bunches of foliage and fruit; the ear was filled with whispering music, and the shadows danced in tune. And next moment the breeze had gone by, and in all the valley nothing moved except our traveling feet. On the opposite slope, the monstrous ribs and gullies of the mountain were faintly designed in the moonshine; and high overhead, in some lone house, there burned one lighted window, one square spark of red in the huge field of sad nocturnal coloring.

At a certain point, as I went downward, turning many acute angles, the moon disappeared behind the hill; and I pursued my way in great darkness, until another turning

shot me without preparation into *St. Germain de Calberte.* The place was asleep and silent, and buried in opaque night. Only from a single open door, some lamplight escaped upon the road to show me I was come among men's habitations. The two last gossips of the evening, still talking by a garden wall, directed me to the inn. The landlady was getting her chicks to bed; the fire was already out, and had, not without grumbling, to be rekindled; half an hour later, and I must have gone supperless to roost.

THE COUNTRY OF THE CAMISARDS

THE LAST DAY

WHEN I awoke (*Thursday, 2d October*), and, hearing a great flourishing of cocks and chuckling of contented hens, betook me to the window of the clean and comfortable room where I had slept the night, I looked forth on a sunshiny morning in a deep vale of chestnut gardens. It was still early, and the cock-crows, and the slanting lights, and the long shadows encouraged me to be out and look round me.

St. Germain de Calberte is a great parish nine leagues round about. At the period of the wars, and immediately before the devastation, it was inhabited by two hundred and seventy-five families, of which only nine were Catholic; and it took the *curé* seventeen *September* days to go from house to house on horseback for a census. But the place itself, although capital of a canton, is scarce larger than a hamlet. It lies terraced across a steep slope in the midst of mighty chestnuts. The Protestant chapel stands below upon a shoulder; in the midst of the town is the quaint old Catholic church.

It was here that poor *Du Chayla,* the Christian martyr, kept his library and held a court of missionaries; here he had built his tomb, thinking to lie among a grateful population whom he had redeemed from error; and hither on the morrow of his death they brought the body, pierced with two-and-fifty wounds, to be interred. Clad in his priestly robes, he was laid out in state in the church. The *curé,* taking his text from Second Samuel, twentieth chapter and twelfth verse, "And *Amasa* wallowed in his blood in the highway," preached a rousing sermon, and exhorted his brethren to die each at his post, like their unhappy and illustrious superior. In the midst of this eloquence there came a breeze that *Spirit Séguier* was near at hand;

and behold! all the assembly took to their horses' heels, some east, some west, and the *curé* himself as far as *Alais.*

Strange was the position of this little Catholic metropolis, a thimbleful of *Rome,* in such a wild and contrary neighborhood. On the one hand, the legion of *Salomon* overlooked it from *Cassagnas;* on the other, it was cut off from assistance by the legion of *Roland* at *Mialet.* The *curé, Louvrelenil,* although he took a panic at the archpriest's funeral, and so hurriedly decamped to *Alais,* stood well by his isolated pulpit, and thence uttered fulminations against the crimes of the Protestants. *Salomon* besieged the village for an hour and a half, but was beat back. The militiamen, on guard before the *curé's* door, could be heard, in the black hours, singing Protestant psalms and holding friendly talk with the insurgents. And in the morning, although not a shot had been fired, there would not be a round of powder in their flasks. Where was it gone? All handed over to the Camisards for a consideration. Untrusty guardians for an isolated priest!

That these continual stirs were once busy in *St. Germain de Calberte,* the imagination with difficulty receives; all is now so quiet, the pulse of human life now beats so low and still in this hamlet of the mountains. Boys followed me a great way off, like a timid sort of lion-hunters; and people turned round to have a second look, or came out of their houses, as I went by. My passage was the first event, you would have fancied, since the Camisards. There was nothing rude or forward in this observation; it was but a pleased and wondering scrutiny, like that of oxen or the human infant; yet it wearied my spirits, and soon drove me from the street.

I took refuge on the terraces, which are here greenly carpeted with sward, and tried to imitate with a pencil the inimitable attitudes of the chestnuts as they bear up their canopy of leaves. Ever and again a little wind went by, and the nuts dropped all around me, with a light and dull sound, upon the sward. The noise was as of a thin fall of great hailstones; but there went with it a

cheerful human sentiment of an approaching harvest and farmers rejoicing in their gains. Looking up, I could see the brown nut peering through the husk, which was already gaping; and between the stems the eye embraced an amphitheater of hill, sunlit and green with leaves.

I have not often enjoyed a place more deeply. I moved in an atmosphere of pleasure, and felt light and quiet and content. But perhaps it was not the place alone that so disposed my spirit. Perhaps some one was thinking of me in another country; or perhaps some thought of my own had come and gone unnoticed, and yet done me good. For some thoughts, which sure would be the most beautiful, vanish before we can rightly scan their features; as though a god, traveling by our green highways, should but ope the door, give one smiling look into the house, and go again forever. Was it *Apollo,* or *Mercury,* or Love with folded wings? Who shall say? But we go the lighter about our business, and feel peace and pleasure in our hearts.

I dined with a pair of Catholics. They agreed in the condemnation of a young man, a Catholic, who had married a Protestant girl and gone over to the religion of his wife. A Protestant born they could understand and respect; indeed, they seemed to be of the mind of an old Catholic woman, who told me that same day there was no difference between the two sects, save that "wrong was more wrong for the Catholic," who had more light and guidance; but this of a man's desertion filled them with contempt.

"It is a bad idea for a man to change," said one.

It may have been accidental, but you see how this phrase pursued me; and for myself, I believe it is the current philosophy in these parts. I have some difficulty in imagining a better. It's not only a great flight of confidence for a man to change his creed and go out of his family for heaven's sake; but the odds are—nay, and the hope is—that, with all this great transition in the eyes of man, he has not changed himself a hair's breadth to the eyes of God. Honor to those who do so, for the wrench

is sore. But it argues something narrow, whether of strength or weakness, whether of the prophet or the fool, in those who can take a sufficient interest in such infinitesimal and human operations, or who can quit a friendship for a doubtful process of the mind. And I think I should not leave my old creed for another, changing only words for other words; but by some brave reading, embrace it in spirit and truth, and find wrong as wrong for me as for the best of other communions.

The *phylloxera* was in the neighborhood; and instead of wine we drank at dinner a more economical juice of the grape—*la Parisienne,* they call it. It is made by putting the fruit whole into a cask with water; one by one the berries ferment and burst; what is drunk during the day is supplied at night in water; so, with ever another pitcher from the well, and ever another grape exploding and giving out its strength, one cask of *Parisienne* may last a family till spring. It is as the reader will anticipate, a feeble beverage, but very pleasant to the taste.

What with dinner and coffee, it was long past three before I left *St. Germain de Calberte.* I went down beside the *Gardon of Mialet,* a great glaring watercourse devoid of water, and through *St. Etienne de Vallée Française,* or *Val Francesque,* as they used to call it; and toward evening began to ascend the hill of *St. Pierre.* It was a long and steep ascent. Behind me an empty carriage returning to *St. Jean du Gard* kept hard upon my tracks, and near the summit overtook me. The driver, like the rest of the world, was sure I was a pedler; but, unlike others, he was sure of what I had to sell. He had noticed the blue wool which hung out of my pack at either end; and from this he had decided, beyond my power to alter his decision, that I dealt in blue-wool collars, such as decorate the neck of the French draft-horse.

I had hurried to the topmost powers of *Modestine,* for I dearly desired to see the view upon the other side before the day had faded. But it was night when I reached the summit; the moon was riding high and clear; and only a few gray streaks of twilight lingered in the west. A yawning valley, gulfed in blackness, lay like a hole in

created nature at my feet; but the outline of the hills was sharp against the sky. There was *Mount Aigoal,* the stronghold of *Castanet.* And *Castanet,* not only as an active undertaking leader, deserves some mention among Camisards; for there is a spray of rose among his laurel; and he showed how, even in a public tragedy, love will have its way. In the high tide of war he married, in his mountain citadel, a young and pretty lass called *Mariette.* There were great rejoicings; and the bridegroom released five-and-twenty prisoners in honor of the glad event. Seven months afterward *Mariette,* the *Princess of the Cévennes,* as they called her in derision, fell into the hands of the authorities, where it was like to have gone hard with her. But *Castanet* was a man of execution, and loved his wife. He fell on *Valleraugue,* and got a lady there for a hostage; and for the first and last time in that war there was an exchange of prisoners. Their daughter, pledge of some starry night upon *Mount Aigoal,* has left descendants to this day.

Modestine and I—it was our last meal together—had a snack upon the top of *St. Pierre,* I on a heap of stones, she standing by me in the moonlight and decorously eating bread out of my hand. The poor brute would eat more heartily in this manner; for she had a sort of affection for me, which I was soon to betray.

It was a long descent upon *St. Jean du Gard,* and we met no one but a carter, visible afar off by the glint of the moon on his extinguished lantern.

Before ten o'clock we had got in and were at supper; fifteen miles and a stiff hill in little beyond six hours!

THE COUNTRY OF THE CAMISARDS

FAREWELL, MODESTINE!

ON examination, on the morning of *October 3d, Modestine* was pronounced unfit for travel. She would need at least two days' repose, according to the hostler; but I was now eager to reach *Alais* for my letters; and, being in a civilized country of stage-coaches, I determined to sell my lady friend and be off by the diligence that afternoon. Our yesterday's march, with the testimony of the driver who had pursued us up the long hill of *St. Pierre,* spread a favorable notion of my donkey's capabilities. Intending purchasers were aware of an unrivaled opportunity. Before ten I had an offer of twenty-five francs; and before noon, after a desperate engagement, I sold her, saddle and all, for five-and-thirty. The pecuniary gain is not obvious, but I had bought freedom into the bargain.

St. Jean du Gard is a large place and largely Protestant. The *maire,* a Protestant, asked me to help him in a small matter which is itself characteristic of the country. The young women of the *Cévennes* profit by the common religion and the difference of the language to go largely as governesses into *England;* and here was one, a native of *Mialet,* struggling with English circulars from two different agencies in *London.* I gave what help I could; and volunteered some advice, which struck me as being excellent.

One thing more I note. The *phylloxera* has ravaged the vineyards in this neighborhood; and in the early morning, under some chestnuts by the river, I found a party of men working with a cider-press. I could not at first make out what they were after, and asked one fellow to explain.

"Making cider," he said. *"Oui, c'est comme ça. Comme dans le nord!"*

There was a ring of sarcasm in his voice: the country was going to the devil.

It was not until I was fairly seated by the driver, and rattling through a rocky valley with dwarf olives, that I became aware of my bereavement. I had lost *Modestine*. Up to that moment I had thought I hated her; but now she was gone.

"And, oh,
The difference to me!"

For twelve days we had been fast companions; we had traveled upward of a hundred and twenty miles, crossed several respectable ridges, and jogged along with our six legs by many a rocky and many a boggy by-road. After the first day, although sometimes I was hurt and distant in manner, I still kept my patience; and as for her, poor soul! she had come to regard me as a god. She loved to eat out of my hand. She was patient, elegant in form, the color of an ideal mouse, and inimitably small. Her faults were those of her race and sex; her virtues were her own. Farewell, and if forever—

Father Adam wept when he sold her to me; after I had sold her in my turn, I was tempted to follow his example: and being alone with a stage-driver and four or five agreeable young men, I did not hesitate to yield to my emotion.

EDINBURGH

AND

OTHER ESSAYS OF PLACES

EDINBURGH

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTORY

THE ancient and famous metropolis of the North sits overlooking a windy estuary from the slope and summit of three hills. No situation could be more commanding for the head city of a kingdom; none better chosen for noble prospects. From her tall precipice and terraced gardens she looks far and wide on the sea and broad champaigns. To the east you may catch at sunset the spark of the May lighthouse, where the Firth expands into the German Ocean; and away to the west, over all the carse of Stirling, you can see the first snows upon Ben Ledi.

But Edinburgh pays cruelly for her high seat in one of the vilest climates under heaven. She is liable to be beaten upon by all the winds that blow, to be drenched with rain, to be buried in cold sea fogs out of the east, and powdered with the snow as it comes flying southward from the Highland hills. The weather is raw and boisterous in winter, shifty and ungenial in summer, and a downright meteorological purgatory in the spring. The delicate die early, and I, as a survivor among bleak winds and plumping rain, have been sometimes tempted to envy them their fate. For all who love shelter and the blessings of the sun, who hate dark weather and perpetual tilting against squalls, there could scarcely be found a more unhomely and harassing place of residence. Many such aspire angrily after that Somewhere-else of the imagination, where all troubles are supposed to end. They lean over the great bridge which joins the New Town with the Old—that windiest spot, or high altar, in this northern

temple of the winds—and watch the trains smoking out from under them and vanishing into the tunnel on a voyage to brighter skies. Happy the passengers who shake off the dust of Edinburgh, and have heard for the last time the cry of the east wind among her chimney-tops! And yet the place establishes an interest in people's hearts; go where they will, they find no city of the same distinction; go where they will, they take a pride in their old home.

Venice, it has been said, differs from all other cities in the sentiment which she inspires. The rest may have admirers; she only, a famous fair one, counts lovers in her train. And, indeed, even by her kindest friends, Edinburgh is not considered in a similar sense. These like her for many reasons, not any one of which is satisfactory in itself. They like her whimsically, if you will, and somewhat as a virtuoso dotes upon his cabinet. Her attraction is romantic in the narrowest meaning of the term. Beautiful as she is, she is not so much beautiful as interesting. She is preeminently Gothic, and all the more so since she has set herself off with some Greek airs, and erected classic temples on her crags. In a word, and above all, she is a curiosity. The Palace of Holyrood has been left aside in the growth of Edinburgh, and stands gray and silent in a workman's quarter and among breweries and gas works. It is a house of many memories. Great people of yore, kings and queens, buffoons and grave ambassadors, played their stately farce for centuries in Holyrood. Wars have been plotted, dancing has lasted deep into the night, murder has been done in its chambers. There Prince Charlie held his phantom levees, and in a very gallant manner represented a fallen dynasty for some hours. Now, all these things of clay are mingled with the dust, the king's crown itself is shown for sixpence to the vulgar; but the stone palace has outlived these changes. For fifty weeks together, it is no more than a show for tourists and a museum of old furniture; but on the fifty-first, behold the palace reawakened and mimicking its past. The Lord Commissioner, a kind of stage sovereign, sits among stage courtiers; a coach and six and clattering escort come and

go before the gate; at night, the windows are lighted up, and its near neighbors, the workmen, may dance in their own houses to the palace music. And in this the palace is typical. There is a spark among the embers; from time to time the old volcano smokes. Edinburgh has but partly abdicated, and still wears, in parody, her metropolitan trappings. Half a capital and half a country town, the whole city leads a double existence; it has long trances of the one and flashes of the other; like the king of the Black Isles, it is half alive and half a monumental marble. There are armed men and cannon in the citadel overhead; you may see the troops marshaled on the high parade; and at night after the early winter even-fall, and in the morning before the laggard winter dawn, the wind carries abroad over Edinburgh the sound of drums and bugles. Grave judges sit bewigged in what was once the scene of imperial deliberations. Close by in the High Street perhaps the trumpets may sound about the stroke of noon; and you see a troop of citizens in tawdry masquerade; tabard above, heather-mixture trouser below, and the men themselves trudging in the mud among unsympathetic bystanders. The grooms of a well-appointed circus tread the streets with a better presence. And yet these are the Heralds and Pursuivants of Scotland, who are about to proclaim a new law of the United Kingdom before two-score boys, and thieves, and hackney-coachmen. Meanwhile every hour the bell of the University rings out over the hum of the streets, and every hour a double tide of students, coming and going, fills the deep archways. And lastly, one night in the springtime—or say one morning rather, at the peep of day—late folk may hear the voices of many men singing a psalm in unison from a church on one side of the old High Street; and a little after, or perhaps a little before, the sound of many men singing a psalm in unison from another church on the opposite side of the way. There will be something in the words about the dew of Hermon, and how goodly it is to see brethren dwelling together in unity. And the late folk will tell themselves that all this singing denotes the conclusion of two yearly ecclesiastical parliaments—the par-

liaments of Churches which are brothers in many admirable virtues, but not specially like brothers in this particular of a tolerant and peaceful life.

Again, meditative people will find a charm in a certain consonancy between the aspect of the city and its odd and stirring history. Few places, if any, offer a more barbaric display of contrasts to the eye. In the very midst stands one of the most satisfactory crags in nature—a Bass Rock upon dry land, rooted in a garden shaken by passing trains, carrying a crown of battlements and turrets, and describing its warlike shadow over the liveliest and brightest thoroughfare of the New Town. From their smoky beehives, ten stories high, the unwashed look down upon the open squares and gardens of the wealthy; and gay people sunning themselves along Princes Street, with its mile of commercial palaces all beflagged upon some great occasion, see, across a gardened valley set with statues, where the washings of the Old Town flutter in the breeze at its high windows. And then, upon all sides, what a clashing of architecture! In this one valley, where the life of the town goes most busily forward, there may be seen, shown one above and behind another by the accidents of the ground, buildings in almost every style upon the globe. Egyptian and Greek temples, Venetian palaces and Gothic spires, are huddled one over another in a most admired disorder; while, above all, the brute mass of the Castle and the summit of Arthur's Seat look down upon these imitations with a becoming dignity, as the works of Nature may look down upon the monuments of Art. But Nature is a more indiscriminate patroness than we imagine, and in no way frightened by a strong effect. The birds roost as willingly among the Corinthian capitals as in the crannies of the crag; the same atmosphere and daylight clothe the eternal rock and yesterday's imitation portico; and as the soft northern sunshine throws out everything into a glorified distinctness—or easterly mists, coming up with the blue evening, fuse all these incongruous features into one, and the lamps begin to glitter along the street, and faint lights to burn in the high windows across the valley—the feeling grows upon you that

this also is a piece of nature in the most intimate sense; that this profusion of eccentricities, this dream in masonry and living rock, is not a drop-scene in a theater, but a city in the world of every-day reality, connected by railway and telegraph-wire with all the capitals of Europe, and inhabited by citizens of the familiar type, who keep ledgers, and attend church, and have sold their immortal portion to a daily paper. By all the canons of romance, the place demands to be half deserted and leaning toward decay; birds we might admit in profusion, the play of the sun and winds, and a few gipsies encamped in the chief thoroughfare; but these citizens, with their cabs and tramways, their trains and posters, are altogether out of key. Chartered tourists, they make free with historic localities, and rear their young among the most picturesque sites with a grand human indifference. To see them thronging by, in their neat clothes and conscious moral rectitude, and with a little air of possession that verges on the absurd, is not the least striking feature of the place.[1]

And the story of the town is as eccentric as its appearance. For centuries it was a capital thatched with heather, and more than once, in the evil days of English invasion, it has gone up in flame to heaven, a beacon to ships at sea. It was the justing-ground of jealous nobles, not only on Greenside, or by the King's Stables, where set tournaments were fought to the sound of trumpets and under the authority of the royal presence, but in every valley where there was room to cross swords, and in the main street, where popular tumult under the Blue

[1] These sentences have, I hear, given offense in my native town, and a proportionable pleasure to our rivals of Glasgow. I confess the news caused me both pain and merriment. May I remark, as a balm for wounded fellow townsmen, that there is nothing deadly in my accusations? Small blame to them if they keep ledgers: 'tis an excellent business habit. Churchgoing is not, that I ever heard, a subject of reproach; decency of linen is a mark of prosperous affairs, and conscious moral rectitude one of the tokens of good living. It is not their fault if the city calls for something more specious by way of inhabitants. A man in a frock coat looks out of place upon an Alp or Pyramid, although he has the virtues of a Peabody and the talents of a Bentham. And let them console themselves—they do as well as anybody else; the population of (let us say) Chicago would cut quite as rueful a figure on the same romantic stage. To the Glasgow people I would say only one word, but that is of gold: *I have not yet written a book about Glasgow.*

Blanket alternated with the brawls of outlandish clansmen and retainers. Down in the palace John Knox reproved his queen in the accents of modern democracy. In the town, in one of those little shops plastered like so many swallows' nests among the buttresses of the old Cathedral, that familiar autocrat, James VI., would gladly share a bottle of wine with George Heriot the goldsmith. Up on the Pentland Hills, that so quietly look down on the Castle with the city lying in waves around it, those mad and dismal fanatics, the Sweet Singers, haggard from long exposure on the moors, sat day and night with "tearful psalms" to see Edinburgh consumed with fire from heaven, like another Sodom or Gomorrah. There, in the Grassmarket, stiff-necked, covenanting heroes offered up the often unnecessary, but not less honorable, sacrifice of their lives, and bade eloquent farewell to sun, moon, and stars, and earthly friendships, or died silent to the roll of drums. Down by yon outlet rode Grahame of Claverhouse and his thirty dragoons, with the town beating to arms behind their horses' tails—a sorry handful thus riding for their lives, but with a man at the head who was to return in a different temper, make a dash that staggered Scotland to the heart, and die happily in the thick of fight. There Aikenhead was hanged for a piece of boyish incredulity; there, a few years afterward, David Hume ruined Philosophy and Faith, an undisturbed and well-reputed citizen; and thither, in yet a few years more, Burns came from the plow-tail, as to an academy of gilt unbelief and artificial letters. There, when the great exodus was made across the valley, and the New Town began to spread abroad its drafty parallelograms, and rear its long frontage on the opposing hill, there was such a flitting, such a change of domicile and dweller, as was never excelled in the history of cities: the cobbler succeeded the earl; the beggar ensconced himself by the judge's chimney; what had been a palace was used as a pauper refuge; and great mansions were so parceled out among the least and lowest in society, that the hearthstone of the old proprietor was thought large enough to be partitioned off into a bedroom by the new.

CHAPTER II

OLD TOWN: THE LANDS

THE Old Town, it is pretended, is the chief characteristic, and, from a picturesque point of view, the liver-wing of Edinburgh. It is one of the most common forms of depreciation to throw cold water on the whole by adroit overcommendation of a part, since everything worth judging, whether it be a man, a work of art, or only a fine city, must be judged upon its merits as a whole. The Old Town depends for much of its effect on the new quarters that lie around it, on the sufficiency of its situation, and on the hills that back it up. If you were to set it somewhere else by itself, it would look remarkably like Stirling in a bolder and loftier edition. The point is to see this embellished Stirling planted in the midst of a large, active, and fantastic modern city; for there the two react in a picturesque sense, and the one is the making of the other.

The Old Town occupies a sloping ridge or tail of diluvial matter, protected, in some subsidence of the waters, by the Castle cliffs which fortify it to the west. On the one side of it and the other the new towns of the south and of the north occupy their lower, broader, and more gentle hilltops. Thus, the quarter of the Castle overtops the whole city and keeps an open view to sea and land. It dominates for miles on every side; and people on the decks of ships, or plowing in quiet country places over in Fife, can see the banner on the castle battlements, and the smoke of the Old Town blowing abroad over the subjacent country. A city that is set upon a hill. It was, I suppose, from this distant aspect that she got her nickname of *Auld Reekie*. Perhaps it was given her by people who had never crossed her doors: day after day, from their various rustic Pisgahs, they had seen the pile of building on the

hilltop, and the long plume of smoke over the plain; so it appeared to them; so it had appeared to their fathers tilling the same field; and as that was all they knew of the place, it could be all expressed in these two words.

Indeed, even on a nearer view, the Old Town is properly smoked; and though it is well washed with rain all the year round, it has a grim and sooty aspect among its younger suburbs. It grew, under the law that regulates the growth of walled cities in precarious situations, not in extent, but in height and density. Public buildings were forced, wherever there was room for them, into the midst of thoroughfares; thoroughfares were diminished into lanes; houses sprang up story after story, neighbor mounting upon neighbor's shoulder, as in some Black Hole of Calcutta, until the population slept fourteen or fifteen deep in a vertical direction. The tallest of these *lands,* as they are locally termed, have long since been burned out; but to this day it is not uncommon to see eight or ten windows at a flight; and the cliff of building which hangs imminent over Waverley Bridge would still put many natural precipices to shame. The cellars are already high above the gazer's head, planted on the steep hillside; as for the garret, all the furniture may be in the pawn-shop, but it commands a famous prospect to the Highland hills. The poor man may roost up there in the center of Edinburgh, and yet have a peep of the green country from his window; he shall see the quarters of the well-to-do fathoms underneath, with their broad squares and gardens; he shall have nothing overhead but a few spires, the stone top-gallants of the city; and perhaps the wind may reach him with a rustic pureness, and bring a smack of the sea, or of flowering lilacs in the spring.

It is almost the correct literary sentiment to deplore the revolutionary improvements of Mr. Chambers and his following. It is easy to be a conservator of the discomforts of others; indeed, it is only our good qualities we find it irksome to conserve. Assuredly, in driving streets through the black labyrinth, a few curious old corners have been swept away, and some associations turned out of house and home. But what slices of sunlight, what breaths of

clean air, have been let in! And what a picturesque world remains untouched! You go under dark arches, and down dark stairs and alleys. The way is so narrow that you can lay a hand on either wall; so steep that, in greasy winter weather, the pavement is almost as treacherous as ice. Washing dangles above washing from the windows; the houses bulge outward upon flimsy brackets; you see a bit of sculpture in a dark corner; at the top of all, a gable and a few crowsteps are printed on the sky. Here, you come into a court where the children are at play and the grown people sit upon their doorsteps, and perhaps a church spire shows itself above the roofs. Here, in the narrowest of the entry, you find a great old mansion still erect, with some insignia of its former state—some scutcheon, some holy or courageous motto, on the lintel. The local antiquary points out where famous and well-born people had their lodging; and as you look up, out pops the head of a slatternly woman from the countess's window. The Bedouins camp within Pharaoh's palace walls, and the old warship is given over to the rats. We are already a far way from the days when powdered heads were plentiful in these alleys, with jolly, port-wine faces underneath. Even in the chief thoroughfares Irish washings flutter at the windows, and the pavements are encumbered with loiterers.

These loiterers are a true character of the scene. Some shrewd Scotch workmen may have paused on their way to a job, debating Church affairs and politics with their tools upon their arm. But the most part are of a different order —skulking jailbirds; unkempt, barefoot children, big-mouthed, robust women, in a sort of uniform of striped flannel petticoat and short tartan shawl; among these, a few supervising constables and a dismal sprinkling of mutineers and broken men from higher ranks in society, with some mark of better days upon them, like a brand. In a place no larger than Edinburgh, and where the traffic is mostly centered in five or six chief streets, the same face comes often under the notice of an idle stroller. In fact, from this point of view, Edinburgh is not so much a small city as the largest of small towns. It is scarce possible to

avoid observing your neighbors; and I never yet heard of any one who tried. It has been my fortune, in this anonymous accidental way, to watch more than one of these downward travelers for some stages on the road to ruin. One man must have been upward of sixty before I first observed him, and he made then a decent, personable figure in broadcloth of the best. For three years he kept falling—grease coming and buttons going from the square-skirted coat, the face puffing and pimpling, the shoulders growing bowed, the hair falling scant and gray upon his head; and the last that ever I saw of him, he was standing at the mouth of an entry with several men in moleskin, three parts drunk, and his old black raiment daubed with mud. I fancy that I still can hear him laugh. There was something heart-breaking in this gradual declension at so advanced an age; you would have thought a man of sixty out of the reach of these calamities; you would have thought that he was niched by that time into a safe place in life, whence he could pass quietly and honorably into the grave.

One of the earliest marks of these *dégringolades* is, that the victim begins to disappear from the New Town thoroughfares, and takes to the High Street, like a wounded animal to the woods. And such an one is the type of the quarter. It also has fallen socially. A scutcheon over the door somewhat jars in sentiment where there is a washing at every window. The old man, when I saw him last, wore the coat in which he had played the gentleman three years before; and that was just what gave him so preeminent an air of wretchedness.

It is true that the overpopulation was at least as dense in the epoch of lords and ladies, and that nowadays some customs which made Edinburgh notorious of yore have been fortunately pretermitted. But an aggregation of comfort is not distasteful like an aggregation of the reverse. Nobody cares how many lords and ladies, and divines and lawyers, may have been crowded into these houses in the past—perhaps the more the merrier. The glasses clink around the china punch-bowl, some one touches the virginals, there are peacocks' feathers on the

chimney, and the tapers burn clear and pale in the red firelight. That is not an ugly picture in itself, nor will it become ugly upon repetition. All the better if the like were going on in every second room; the *land* would only look the more inviting. Times are changed. In one house, perhaps two-score families herd together; and, perhaps, not one of them is wholly out of the reach of want. The great hotel is given over to discomfort from the foundation to the chimney-tops; everywhere a pinching, narrow habit, scanty meals, and an air of sluttishness and dirt. In the first room there is a birth, in another a death, in a third a sordid drinking-bout, and the detective and the Bible-reader cross upon the stairs. High words are audible from dwelling to dwelling, and children have a strange experience from the first; only a robust soul, you would think, could grow up in such conditions without hurt. And even if God tempers His dispensations to the young, and all the ill does not arise that our apprehensions may forecast, the sight of such a way of living is disquieting to people who are more happily circumstanced. Social inequality is nowhere more ostentatious than at Edinburgh. I have mentioned already how, to the stroller along Princes Street, the High Street callously exhibits its back garrets. It is true, there is a garden between. And although nothing could be more glaring by way of contrast, sometimes the opposition is more immediate; sometimes the thing lies in a nutshell, and there is not so much as a blade of grass between the rich and poor. To look over the South Bridge and see the Cowgate below full of crying hawkers, is to view one rank of society from another in the twinkling of an eye.

One night I went along Cowgate after every one was abed but the policeman, and stopped by hazard before a tall *land*. The moon touched upon its chimneys, and shone blankly on the upper windows; there was no light anywhere in the great bulk of building; but as I stood there it seemed to me that I could hear quite a body of quiet sounds from the interior; doubtless there were many clocks ticking, and people snoring on their backs. And thus, as I fancied, the dense life within made itself faintly

audible in my ears, family after family contributing its quota to the general hum, and the whole pile beating in tune to its timepieces, like a great disordered heart. Perhaps it was little more than a fancy altogether, but it was strangely impressive at the time, and gave me an imaginative measure of the disproportion between the quantity of living flesh and the trifling walls that separated and contained it.

There was nothing fanciful, at least, but every circumstance of terror and reality, in the fall of the *land* in the High Street. The building had grown rotten to the core; the entry underneath had suddenly closed up so that the scavenger's barrow could not pass; cracks and reverberations sounded through the house at night; the inhabitants of the huge old human beehive discussed their peril when they encountered on the stair; some had even left their dwellings in a panic of fear, and returned to them again in a fit of economy or self-respect; when, in the black hours of a Sunday morning, the whole structure ran together with a hideous uproar and tumbled story upon story to the ground. The physical shock was felt far and near; and the moral shock traveled with the morning milkmaid into all the suburbs. The church-bells never sounded more dismally over Edinburgh than that gray forenoon. Death had made a brave harvest, and, like Samson, by pulling down one roof, destroyed many a home. None who saw it can have forgotten the aspect of the gable; here it was plastered, there papered, according to the rooms; here the kettle still stood on the hob, high overhead; and there a cheap picture of the Queen was pasted over the chimney. So, by this disaster, you had a glimpse into the life of thirty families, all suddenly cut off from the revolving years. The *land* had fallen; and with the *land* how much! Far in the country, people saw a gap in the city ranks, and the sun looked through between the chimneys in an unwonted place. And all over the world, in London, in Canada, in New Zealand, fancy what a multitude of people could exclaim with truth: "The house that I was born in fell last night!"

CHAPTER III

THE PARLIAMENT CLOSE

TIME has wrought its changes most notably around the precinct of St. Giles's Church. The church itself, if it were not for the spire, would be unrecognizable; the *Krames* are all gone, not a shop is left to shelter in its buttresses; and zealous magistrates and a misguided architect have shorn the design of manhood, and left it poor, naked, and pitifully pretentious. As St. Giles's must have had in former days a rich and quaint appearance now forgotten, so the neighborhood was bustling, sunless, and romantic. It was here that the town was most overbuilt; but the overbuilding has been all rooted out, and not only a free fairway left along the High Street with an open space on either side of the church, but a great porthole, knocked in the main line of the *lands,* gives an outlook to the north and the New Town.

There is a silly story of a subterranean passage between the Castle and Holyrood, and a bold Highland piper who volunteered to explore its windings. He made his entrance by the upper end, playing a strathspey; the curious footed it after him down the street, following his descent by the sound of the chanter from below: until all of a sudden, about the level of St. Giles's, the music came abruptly to an end, and the people in the street stood at fault with hands uplifted. Whether he was choked with gases, or perished in a quag, or was removed bodily by the Evil One, remains a point of doubt; but the piper has never again been seen or heard of from that day to this. Perhaps he wandered down into the land of Thomas the Rhymer, and some day, when it is least expected, may take a thought to revisit the sunlit upper world. That will be a strange moment for the cabmen on the stance beside St. Giles's, when they hear the drone of his pipes re-

ascending from the bowels of the earth below their horses' feet.

But it is not only pipers who have vanished, many a solid bulk of masonry has been likewise spirited into the air. Here, for example, is the shape of a heart let into the causeway. This was the site of the Tolbooth, the Heart of Midlothian, a place old in story and name-father to a noble book. The walls are now down in the dust; there is no more *squalor carceris* for merry debtors, no more cage for the old, acknowledged prison-breaker; but the sun and the wind play freely over the foundations of the jail. Nor is this the only memorial that the pavement keeps of former days. The ancient burying-ground of Edinburgh lay behind St. Giles's Church, running downhill to the Cowgate and covering the site of the present Parliament House. It has disappeared as utterly as the prison or the Luckenbooths; and for those ignorant of its history, I know only one token that remains. In the Parliament Close, trodden daily underfoot by advocates, two letters and a date mark the resting-place of the man who made Scotland over again in his own image, the indefatigable, undissuadable John Knox. He sleeps within call of the church that so often echoed to his preaching.

Hard by the reformer, a bandy-legged and garlanded Charles Second, made of lead, bestrides a tun-bellied charger. The King has his back turned, and, as you look, seems to be trotting clumsily away from such a dangerous neighbor. Often, for hours together, these two will be alone in the Close, for it lies out of the way of all but legal traffic. On one side the south wall of the church, on the other the arcades of the Parliament House, enclose this irregular bight of causeway and describe their shadows on it in the sun. At either end, from round St. Giles's buttresses, you command a look into the High Street with its motley passengers; but the stream goes by, east and west, and leaves the Parliament Close to Charles the Second and the birds. Once in a while, a patient crowd may be seen loitering there all day, some eating fruit, some reading a newspaper; and to judge by their quiet demeanor, you would think they were waiting

for a distribution of soup-tickets. The fact is far otherwise; within in the Justiciary Court a man is upon trial for his life, and these are some of the curious for whom the gallery was found too narrow. Toward afternoon, if the prisoner is unpopular, there will be a round of hisses when he is brought forth. Once in a while, too, an advocate in wig and gown, hand upon mouth, full of pregnant nods, sweeps to and fro in the arcade listening to an agent; and at certain regular hours a whole tide of lawyers hurries across the space.

The Parliament Close has been the scene of marking incidents in Scottish history. Thus, when the Bishops were ejected from the Convention in 1688, "all fourteen of them gathered together with pale faces and stood in a cloud in the Parliament Close"; poor episcopal personages who were done with fair weather for life! Some of the west country Societarians standing by, who would have "rejoiced more than in great sums" to be at their hanging, hustled them so rudely that they knocked their heads together. It was not magnanimous behavior to dethroned enemies; but one, at least, of the Societarians had groaned in the *boots,* and they had all seen their dear friends upon the scaffold. Again, at the "woeful Union," it was here that people crowded to escort their favorite from the last of Scottish parliaments: people flushed with nationality, as Boswell would have said, ready for riotous acts, and fresh from throwing stones at the author of *Robinson Crusoe* as he looked out of window.

One of the pious in the seventeenth century, going to pass his *trials* (examinations as we now say) for the Scottish Bar, beheld the Parliament Close open and had a vision of the mouth of Hell. This, and small wonder, was the means of his conversion. Nor was the vision unsuitable to the locality; for after an hospital, what uglier piece is there in civilization than a court of law? Hither come envy, malice, and all uncharitableness to wrestle it out in public tourney; crimes, broken fortunes, severed households, the knave and his victim, gravitate to this low building with the arcade. To how many has not St. Giles's bell told the first hour after ruin? I think I see

them pause to count the strokes, and wander on again into the moving High Street, stunned and sick at heart.

A pair of swing doors gives admittance to a hall with a carved roof, hung with legal portraits, adorned with legal statuary, lighted by windows of painted glass, and warmed by three vast fires. This is the *Salle des pas perdus* of the Scottish Bar. Here, by a ferocious custom, idle youths must promenade from ten till two. From end to end, singly or in pairs or trios, the gowns and wigs go back and forward. Through a hum of talk and footfalls, the piping tones of a Macer announce a fresh cause and call upon the names of those concerned. Intelligent men have been walking here daily for ten or twenty years without a rag of business or a shilling of reward. In process of time, they may perhaps be made the Sheriff-Substitute and Fountain of Justice at Lerwick or Tobermory. There is nothing required, you would say, but a little patience and a taste for exercise and bad air. To breathe dust and bombazine, to feed the mind on cackling gossip, to hear three parts of a case and drink a glass of sherry, to long with indescribable longings for the hour when a man may slip out of his travesty and devote himself to golf for the rest of the afternoon, and to do this day by day and year after year, may seem so small a thing to the inexperienced! But those who have made the experiment are of a different way of thinking, and count it the most arduous form of idleness.

More swing doors open into pigeonholes where Judges of the First Appeal sit singly, and halls of audience where the supreme Lords sit by three or four. Here, you may see Scott's place within the bar, where he wrote many a page of Waverley novels to the drone of judicial proceeding. You will hear a good deal of shrewdness, and, as their Lordships do not altogether disdain pleasantry, a fair proportion of dry fun. The broadest of broad Scotch is now banished from the bench; but the courts still retain national flavor. We have a solemn enjoyable way of lingering on a case. We treat law as a fine art, and relish and digest a good distinction. There is no hurry: point after point must be rightly examined and reduced to

principle; judge after judge must utter forth his *obiter dicta* to delighted brethren.

Besides the courts, there are installed under the same roof no less than three libraries: two of no mean order; confused and semisubterranean, full of stairs and galleries; where you may see the most studious-looking wigs fishing out novels by lanthorn light, in the very place where the old Privy Council tortured Covenanters. As the Parliament House is built upon a slope, although it presents only one story to the north, it measures half a dozen at least upon the south; and range after range of vaults extend below the libraries. Few places are more characteristic of this hilly capital. You descend one stone stair after another, and wander, by the flicker of a match, in a labyrinth of stone cellars. Now, you pass below the Outer Hall and hear overhead, brisk but ghostly, the interminable pattering of legal feet. Now, you come upon a strong door with a wicket: on the other side are the cells of the police office and the trap-stair that gives admittance to the dock in the Justiciary Court. Many a foot that has gone up there lightly enough, has been dead heavy in the descent. Many a man's life has been argued away from him during long hours in the court above. But just now that tragic stage is empty and silent like a church on a week-day, with the bench all sheeted up and nothing moving but the sunbeams on the wall. A little farther and you strike upon a room, not empty like the rest, but crowded with *productions* from bygone criminal cases: a grim lumber: lethal weapons, poisoned organs in a jar, a door with a shot-hole through the panel, behind which a man fell dead. I can not fancy why they should preserve them, unless it were against the Judgment Day. At length, as you continue to descend, you see a peep of yellow gaslight and hear a jostling, whispering noise ahead; next moment you turn a corner, and there, in a whitewashed passage, is a machinery belt industriously turning on its wheels. You would think the engine had grown there of its own accord, like a cellar fungus, and would soon spin itself out and fill the vaults from end to end with its mysterious labors. In truth, it is only some gear of the steam venti-

lator; and you will find the engineers at hand, and may step out of their door into the sunlight. For all this while, you have not been descending toward the earth's center, but only to the bottom of the hill and the foundations of the Parliament House; low down, to be sure, but still under the open heaven and in a field of grass. The daylight shines garishly on the back windows of the Irish quarter; on broken shutters, wry gables, old palsied houses on the brink of ruin, a crumbling human pigsty fit for human pigs. There are few signs of life, besides a scanty washing or a face at a window; the dwellers are abroad, but they will return at night and stagger to their pallets.

CHAPTER IV

LEGENDS

THE character of a place is often most perfectly expressed in its associations. An event strikes root and grows into a legend, when it has happened amongst congenial surroundings. Ugly actions, above all in ugly places, have the true romantic quality, and become an undying property of their scene. To a man like Scott, the different appearances of nature seemed each to contain its own legend ready made, which it was his to call forth: in such or such a place, only such or such events ought with propriety to happen; and in this spirit he made the *Lady of the Lake* for Ben Venue, the *Heart of Midlothian* for Edinburgh, and the *Pirate,* so indifferently written but so romantically conceived, for the desolate islands and roaring tideways of the North. The common run of mankind have, from generation to generation, an instinct almost as delicate as that of Scott; but where he created new things, they only forget what is unsuitable among the old; and by survival of the fittest, a body of tradition becomes a work of art. So in the low dens and high-flying garrets of Edinburgh, people may go back upon dark passages in the town's adventures, and chill their marrow with winter's tales about the fire: tales that are singularly apposite and characteristic, not only of the old life, but of the very constitution of built nature in that part, and singularly well qualified to add horror to horror, when the wind pipes around the tall *lands,* and hoots adown arched passages, and the far-spread wilderness of city lamps keeps quavering and flaring in the gusts.

Here, it is the tale of Begbie, the bank-porter, stricken to the heart at a blow and left in his blood within a step or two of the crowded High Street. There, people hush their

voices over Burke and Hare; over drugs and violated graves, and the resurrection-men smothering their victims with their knees. Here, again, the fame of Deacon Brodie is kept piously fresh. A great man in his day was the Deacon; well seen in good society, crafty with his hands as a cabinet-maker, and one who could sing a song with taste. Many a citizen was proud to welcome the Deacon to supper, and dismissed him with regret at a timeous hour, who would have been vastly disconcerted had he known how soon, and in what guise, his visitor returned. Many stories are told of this redoubtable Edinburgh burglar, but the one I have in my mind most vividly gives the key of all the rest. A friend of Brodie's nested some way toward heaven in one of these great *lands,* had told him of a projected visit to the country, and afterward, detained by some affairs, put it off and stayed the night in town. The good man had lain some time awake; it was far on in the small hours by the Tron bell; when suddenly there came a creak, a jar, a faint light. Softly he clambered out of bed and up to a false window which looked upon another room, and there, by the glimmer of a thieves' lantern, was his good friend the Deacon in a mask. It is characteristic of the town and the town's manners that this little episode should have been quietly tided over, and quite a good time elapsed before a great robbery, an escape, a Bow Street runner, a cock-fight, an apprehension in a cupboard in Amsterdam, and a last step into the air off his own greatly improved gallows drop, brought the career of Deacon William Brodie to an end. But still, by the mind's eye, he may be seen, a man harassed below a mountain of duplicity, slinking from a magistrate's supper-room to a thieves' ken, and pickeering among the closes by the flicker of a dark lamp.

Or where the Deacon is out of favor, perhaps some memory lingers of the great plagues, and of fatal houses still unsafe to enter within the memory of man. For in time of pestilence the discipline had been sharp and sudden, and what we now call "stamping out contagion" was carried on with deadly rigor. The officials, in their gowns of gray, with a white St. Andrew's cross on back and

breast, and white cloth carried before them on a staff, perambulated the city, adding the terror of man's justice to the fear of God's visitation. The dead they buried on the Borough Muir; the living who had concealed the sickness were drowned, if they were women, in the Quarry Holes, and if they were men, were hanged and gibbeted at their own doors; and wherever the evil had passed, furniture was destroyed and houses closed. And the most bogeyish part of the story is about such houses. Two generations back they still stood dark and empty; people avoided them as they passed by; the boldest schoolboy only shouted through the keyhole and made off; for within, it was supposed, the plague lay ambushed like a basilisk, ready to flow forth and spread blain and pustule through the city. What a terrible next-door neighbor for superstitious citizens! A rat scampering within would send a shudder through the stoutest heart. Here, if you like, was a sanitary parable, addressed by our uncleanly forefathers to their own neglect.

And then we have Major Weir; for although even his house is now demolished, old Edinburgh can not clear herself of his unholy memory. He and his sister lived together in an odor of sour piety. She was a marvelous spinster; he had a rare gift of supplication, and was known among devout admirers by the name of Angelical Thomas. "He was a tall, black man, and ordinarily looked down to the ground; a grim countenance, and a big nose. His garb was still a cloak, and somewhat dark, and he never went without his staff." How it came about that Angelical Thomas was burned in company with his staff, and his sister in gentler manner hanged, and whether these two were simply religious maniacs of the more furious order, or had real as well as imaginary sins upon their old-world shoulders, are points happily beyond the reach of our intention. At least, it is suitable enough that out of this superstitious city some such example should have been put forth: the outcome and fine flower of dark and vehement religion. And at least the facts struck the public fancy and brought forth a remarkable family of myths. It would appear that the Major's staff went upon his

errands, and even ran before him with a lantern on dark nights. Gigantic females, "stentoriously laughing and gaping with tehees of laughter" at unseasonable hours of night and morning, haunted the purlieus of his abode. His house fell under such a load of infamy that no one dared to sleep in it, until municipal improvement leveled the structure with the ground. And my father has often been told in the nursery how the devil's coach, drawn by six coal-black horses with fiery eyes, would drive at night into the West Row, and belated people might see the dead Major through the glasses.

Another legend is that of the two maiden sisters. A legend I am afraid it may be, in the most discreditable meaning of the term; or perhaps something worse—a mere yesterday's fiction. But it is a story of some vitality, and is worthy of a place in the Edinburgh calendar. This pair inhabited a single room; from the facts, it must have been double-bedded; and it may have been of some dimensions: but when all is said, it was a single room. Here our two spinsters fell out—on some point of controversial divinity belike: but fell out so bitterly that there was never a word spoken between them, black or white, from that day forward. You would have thought they would separate: but no; whether from lack of means, or the Scottish fear of scandal, they continued to keep house together where they were. A chalk line drawn upon the floor separated their two domains; it bisected the doorway and the fireplace, so that each could go out and in, and do her cooking, without violating the territory of the other. So, for years, they coexisted in a hateful silence; their meals, their ablutions, their friendly visitors, exposed to an unfriendly scrutiny; and at night, in the dark watches, each could hear the breathing of her enemy. Never did four walls look down upon an uglier spectacle than these sisters rivaling in unsisterliness. Here is a canvas for Hawthorne to have turned into a cabinet picture—he had a Puritanic vein, which would have fitted him to treat this Puritanic horror; he could have shown them to us in their sicknesses and at their hideous twin devotions, thumbing a pair of great Bibles, or praying aloud for each other's penitence with

marrowy emphasis; now each, with kilted petticoat, at her own corner of the fire on some tempestuous evening; now sitting each at her window, looking out upon the summer landscape sloping far below them toward the firth, and the field paths where they had wandered hand in hand; or, as age and infirmity grew upon them and prolonged their toilets, and their hands began to tremble and their heads to nod involuntarily, growing only the more steeled in enmity with years; until one fine day, at a word, a look, a visit, or the approach of death, their hearts would melt and the chalk boundary be overstepped for ever.

Alas! to those who know the ecclesiastical history of the race—the most perverse and melancholy in man's annals—this will seem only a figure of much that is typical of Scotland and her high-seated capital above the Forth—a figure so grimly realistic that it may pass with strangers for a caricature. We are wonderful patient haters for conscience' sake up here in the North. I spoke, in the first of these papers, of the Parliaments of the Established and Free Churches, and how they can hear each other singing psalms across the street. There is but a street between them in space, but a shadow between them in principle; and yet there they sit, enchanted, and in damnatory accents pray for each other's growth in grace. It would be well if there were no more than two; but the sects in Scotland form a large family of sisters, and the chalk lines are thickly drawn, and run through the midst of many private homes. Edinburgh is a city of churches, as though it were a place of pilgrimage. You will see four within a stone-cast at the head of the West Bow. Some are crowded to the doors; some are empty like monuments; and yet you will ever find new ones in the building. Hence that surprising clamor of church bells that suddenly breaks out upon the Sabbath morning from Trinity and the sea-skirts to Morningside on the borders of the hills. I have heard the chimes of Oxford playing their symphony in a golden autumn morning, and beautiful it was to hear. But in Edinburgh all manner of loud bells join, or rather disjoin, in one swelling, brutal babblement of noise. Now one overtakes another, and now lags behind

it; now five or six all strike on the pained tympanum at the same punctual instant of time, and make together a dismal chord of discord; and now for a second all seem to have conspired to hold their peace. Indeed, there are not many uproars in this world more dismal than that of the Sabbath bells in Edinburgh: a harsh ecclesiastical tocsin; the outcry of incongruous orthodoxies, calling on every separate conventicler to put up a protest, each in his own synagogue, against "right-hand extremes and left-hand defections." And surely there are few worse extremes than this extremity of zeal; and few more deplorable defections than this disloyalty to Christian love. Shakespeare wrote a comedy of "Much Ado about Nothing." The Scottish nation made a fantastic tragedy on the same subject. And it is for the success of this remarkable piece that these bells are sounded every Sabbath morning on the hills above the Forth. How many of them might rest silent in the steeple, how many of these ugly churches might be demolished and turned once more into useful building material, if people who think almost exactly the same thoughts about religion would condescend to worship God under the same roof! But there are the chalk lines. And which is to pocket pride, and speak the foremost word?

CHAPTER V

GREYFRIARS

IT WAS Queen Mary who threw open the gardens of the Gray Friars: a new and semirural cemetery in those days, although it has grown an antiquity in its turn and been superseded by half a dozen others. The Friars must have had a pleasant time on summer evenings; for their gardens were situated to a wish, with the tall castle and the tallest of the castle crags in front. Even now, it is one of our famous Edinburgh points of view; and strangers are led thither to see, by yet another instance, how strangely the city lies upon her hills. The enclosure is of an irregular shape; the double church of Old and New Greyfriars stands on the level at the top; a few thorns are dotted here and there, and the ground falls by terrace and steep slope toward the north. The open shows many slabs and table tombstones; and all round the margin the place is girt by an array of aristocratic mausoleums appallingly adorned.

Setting aside the tombs of Roubilliac, which belong to the heroic order of graveyard art, we Scots stand, to my fancy, highest among nations in the matter of grimly illustrating death. We seem to love for their own sake the emblems of time and the great change; and even around country churches you will find a wonderful exhibition of skulls, and crossbones, and noseless angels, and trumpets pealing for the Judgment Day. Every mason was a pedestrian Holbein: he had a deep consciousness of death, and loved to put its terrors pithily before the churchyard loiterer; he was brimful of rough hints upon mortality, and any dead farmer was seized upon to be a text. The classical examples of this art are in Greyfriars. In their time, these were doubtless costly monuments, and reckoned of a very elegant proportion by contemporaries; and now,

when the elegance is not so apparent, the significance remains. You may perhaps look with a smile on the profusion of Latin mottoes—some crawling endwise up the shaft of a pillar, some issuing on a scroll from angels' trumpets—on the emblematic horrors, the figures rising headless from the grave, and all the traditional ingenuities in which it pleased our fathers to set forth their sorrow for the dead and their sense of earthly mutability. But it is not a hearty sort of mirth. Each ornament may have been executed by the merriest apprentice, whistling as he plied the mallet; but the original meaning of each, and the combined effect of so many of them in this quiet enclosure, is serious to the point of melancholy.

Round a great part of the circuit, houses of a low class present their backs to the churchyard. Only a few inches separate the living from the dead. Here, a window is partly blocked up by the pediment of a tomb; there, where the street falls far below the level of the graves, a chimney has been trained up the back of a monument, and a red pot looks vulgarly over from behind. A damp smell of the graveyard finds its way into houses where workmen sit at meat. Domestic life on a small scale goes forward visibly at the windows. The very solitude and stillness of the enclosure, which lies apart from the town's traffic, serves to accentuate the contrast. As you walk upon the graves, you see children scattering crums to feed the sparrows; you hear people singing or washing dishes, or the sound of tears and castigation; the linen on a clothes-pole flaps against funereal sculpture; or perhaps the cat slips over the lintel and descends on a memorial urn. And as there is nothing else astir, these incongruous sights and noises take hold on the attention and exaggerate the sadness of the place.

Greyfriars is continually overrun by cats. I have seen one afternoon, as many as thirteen of them seated on the grass beside old Milne, the Master Builder, all sleek and fat, and complacently blinking, as if they had fed upon strange meats. Old Milne was chanting with the saints, as we may hope, and cared little for the company about his grave: but I confess the spectacle had an ugly side for

me; and I was glad to step forward and raise my eyes to where the Castle and the roofs of the Old Town, and the spire of the Assembly Hall stood deployed against the sky with the colorless precision of engraving. An open outlook is to be desired from a churchyard, and a sight of the sky and some of the world's beauty relieves a mind from morbid thoughts.

I shall never forget one visit. It was a gray, dropping day; the grass was strung with rain-drops; and the people in the houses kept hanging out their shirts and petticoats and angrily taking them in again, as the weather turned from wet to fair and back again. A grave-digger, and a friend of his, a gardener from the country, accompanied me into one after another of the cells and little courtyards in which it gratified the wealthy of old days to enclose their old bones from neighborhood. In one, under a sort of shrine, we found a forlorn human effigy, very realistically executed down to the detail of his ribbed stockings, and holding in his hand a ticket with the date of his demise. He looked most pitiful and ridiculous, shut up by himself in his aristocratic precinct, like a bad old boy or an inferior forgotten deity under a new dispensation; the burdocks grew familiarly about his feet, the rain dripped all round him; and the world maintained the most entire indifference as to who he was or whither he had gone. In another, a vaulted tomb, handsome externally but horrible inside with damp and cobwebs, there were three mounds of black earth and an uncovered thigh bone. This was the place of interment, it appeared, of the family with whom the gardener had been long in service. He was among old acquaintances. "This'll be Miss Marg'et's," said he, giving the bone a friendly kick. "The auld ——!"

I have always an uncomfortable feeling in a graveyard, at sight of so many tombs to perpetuate memories best forgotten; but I never had the impression so strongly as that day.

People had been at some expense in both these cases: to provoke a melancholy feeling of derision in the one, and an insulting epithet in the other. The proper

inscription for the most part of mankind, I began to think, is the cynical jeer, *cras tibi.* That, if anything, will stop the mouth of a carper; since it both admits the worst and carries the war triumphantly into the enemy's camp.

Greyfriars is a place of many associations. There was one window in a house at the lower end, now demolished, which was pointed out to me by the grave-digger as a spot of legendary interest. Burke, the resurrection-man, infamous for so many murders at five shillings a head, used to sit thereat, with pipe and nightcap, to watch burials going forward on the green. In a tomb higher up, which must then have been but newly finished, John Knox, according to the same informant, had taken refuge in a turmoil of the Reformation. Behind the church is the haunted mausoleum of Sir George Mackenzie: Bloody Mackenzie, Lord Advocate in the Covenanting troubles and author of some pleasing sentiments on toleration. Here, in the last century, an old Heriot's Hospital boy once harbored from the pursuit of the police. The Hospital is next door to Greyfriars—a courtly building among lawns, where, on Founder's Day, you may see a multitude of children playing Kiss-in-the-Ring and Round the Mulberry-bush. Thus, when the fugitive had managed to conceal himself in the tomb, his old schoolmates had a hundred opportunities to bring him food; and there he lay in safety till a ship was found to smuggle him abroad. But his must have been indeed a heart of brass, to lie all day and night alone with the dead persecutor; and other lads were far from emulating him in courage. When a man's soul is certainly in hell, his body will scarce lie quiet in a tomb, however costly; some time or other the door must open, and the reprobate come forth in the abhorred garments of the grave. It was thought a high piece of prowess to knock at the Lord Advocate's mausoleum and challenge him to appear. "Bluidy Mackenzie, come oot if ye daur!" sang the foolhardy urchins. But Sir George had other affairs on hand; and the author of an essay on toleration continues to sleep peacefully among the many whom he so intolerantly helped to slay.

For this *infelix campus,* as it is dubbed in one of its own inscriptions—an inscription over which Dr. Johnson passed a critical eye—is in many ways sacred to the memory of the men whom Mackenzie persecuted. It was here, on the flat tombstones, that the Covenant was signed by an enthusiastic people. In the long arm of the churchyard that extends to Lauriston, the prisoners from Bothwell Bridge—fed on bread and water and guarded, life for life, by vigilant marksmen—lay five months looking for the scaffold or the plantations. And while the good work was going forward in the Grassmarket, idlers in Greyfriars might have heard the throb of the military drums that drowned the voices of the martyrs. Nor is this all: for down in the corner farthest from Sir George there stands a monument dedicated, in uncouth Covenanting verse, to all who lost their lives in that contention. There is no moorsman shot in a snow shower beside Irongray or Co'monell; there is not one of the two hundred who were drowned off the Orkneys; nor so much as a poor, overdriven, Covenanting slave in the American plantations, but can lay claim to a share in that memorial, and, if such things interest just men among the shades, can boast he has a monument on earth as well as Julius Cæsar or the Pharaohs. Where they may all lie, I know not. Far-scattered bones, indeed! But if the reader cares to learn how some of them—or some part of some of them—found their way at length to such honorable sepulcher, let him listen to the words of one who was their comrade in life and their apologist when they were dead. Some of the insane controversial matter I omit, as well as some digressions, but leave the rest in Patrick Walker's language and orthography:

"The never to be forgotten Mr. *James Renwick* told me, that he was Witness to their Public Murder at the *Gallowlee,* between *Leith* and *Edinburgh,* when he saw the Hangman hash and hagg off all their Five Heads, with *Patrick Foreman's* Right Hand: Their Bodies were all buried at the Gallows Foot; their Heads, with *Patrick's* Hand, were brought and put upon five pikes on the *Pleasaunce-Port.* . . . Mr. *Renwick* told me also that it was the first public Action that his Hand was at, to conveen Friends, and lift their murthered Bodies, and carried them to the West Churchyard of *Edinburgh,*"—not Greyfriars, this

time,—"and buried them there. Then they came about the City . . . and took down these Five Heads and that Hand; and Day being come, they went quickly up the *Pleasaunce;* and when they came to *Lauristoun* Yards, upon the South-Side of the City, they durst not venture, being so light, to go and bury their Heads with their Bodies, which they designed; it being present Death, if any of them had been found. *Alexander Tweedie,* a Friend, being with them, who at that time was Gardner in these Yards, concluded to bury them in his Yard, being in a Box (wrapped in Linen), where they lay 45 Years, except 3 Days, being executed upon the 10th of *October,* 1681, and found the 7th Day of *October,* 1726. That Piece of Ground lay for some Years unlabored; and trenching it, the Gardner found them, which affrighted him; the Box was consumed. Mr. *Schaw,* the Owner of these Yards, caused lift them, and lay them upon a Table in his Summer-house: Mr. *Schaw's* mother was so kind, as to cut out a Linen-Cloth, and cover them. They lay Twelve Days there, where all had Access to see them. *Alexander Tweedie,* the foresaid Gardner, said, when dying, There was a Treasure hid in his Yard, but neither Gold nor Silver. *Daniel Tweedie,* his Son, came along with me to that Yard, and told me that his Father planted a white Rose-Bush above them, and farther down the Yard a red Rose-Bush, which were more fruitful than any other Bush in the Yard. . . . Many came"—to see the heads —"out of Curiosity; yet I rejoiced to see so many concerned grave Men and Women favouring the Dust of our Martyrs. There were Six of us concluded to bury them upon the Nineteenth Day of *October* 1726, and every One of us to acquaint Friends of the Day and Hour, being *Wednesday,* the Day of the Week on which most of them were executed, and at 4 of the Clock at Night, being the Hour that most of them went to their resting Graves. We caused make a compleat Coffin for them in Black, with four Yards of fine Linen, the way that our Martyrs Corps were managed. . . . Accordingly we kept the aforesaid Day and Hour, and doubled the Linen, and laid the Half of it below them, their nether Jaws being parted from their Heads; but being young Men, their Teeth remained. All were Witness to the Holes in each of their Heads, which the Hangman broke with his Hammer; and according to the Bigness of their Sculls, we laid the Jaws to them, and drew the other Half of the Linen above them, and stufft the Coffin with Shavings. Some prest hard to go thorow the chief Parts of the City as was done at the Revolution; but this we refused, considering that it looked airy and frothy, to make such Show of them, and inconsistent with the solid serious Observing of such an affecting, surprizing unheard-of Dispensation: But took the ordinary Way of other Burials from that Place, to wit, we went east the Back of the Wall, and in at *Bristo-Port,* and down the Way to the Head of the *Cowgate,* and turned up to the Church-yard, where they were interred closs to the Martyrs Tomb, with the greatest Multitude of People Old and Young, Men and Women, Ministers and others, that ever I saw together."

And so there they were at last, in "their resting graves." So long as men do their duty, even if it be greatly in a misapprehension, they will be leading pattern lives; and whether or not they come to lie beside a martyrs' monument, we may be sure they will find a safe haven somewhere in the providence of God. It is not well to think of death, unless we temper the thought with that of heroes who despised it. Upon what ground, is of small account; if it be only the bishop who was burned for his faith in the antipodes, his memory lightens the heart and makes us walk undisturbed among graves. And so the martyrs' monument is a wholesome, heartsome spot in the field of the dead; and as we look upon it, a brave influence comes to us from the land of those who have won their discharge and, in another phrase of Patrick Walker's, got "cleanly off the stage."

CHAPTER VI

NEW TOWN: TOWN AND COUNTRY

IT IS as much a matter of course to decry the New Town as to exalt the Old; and the most celebrated authorities have picked out this quarter as the very emblem of what is condemnable in architecture. Much may be said, much indeed has been said, upon the text; but to the unsophisticated, who call anything pleasing if it only pleases them, the New Town of Edinburgh seems, in itself, not only gay and airy, but highly picturesque. An old skipper, invincibly ignorant of all theories of the sublime and beautiful, once propounded as his most radiant notion for Paradise: "The new town of Edinburgh, with the wind the matter of a point free." He has now gone to that sphere where all good tars are promised pleasant weather in the song, and perhaps his thoughts fly somewhat higher. But there are bright and temperate days—with soft air coming from the inland hills, military music sounding bravely from the hollow of the gardens, the flags all waving on the palaces of Princes Street—when I have seen the town through a sort of glory, and shaken hands in sentiment with the old sailor. And indeed, for a man who has been much tumbled round Orcadian skerries, what scene could be more agreeable to witness? On such a day, the valley wears a surprising air of festival. It seems (I do not know how else to put my meaning) as if it were a trifle too good to be true. It is what Paris ought to be. It has the scenic quality that would best set off a life of unthinking, open-air diversion. It was meant by nature for the realization of the society of comic operas. And you can imagine, if the climate were but towardly, how all the world and his wife would flock into these gardens in the cool of the evening, to hear cheerful music, to sip pleasant drinks, to see the moon

rise from behind Arthur's Seat and shine upon the spires and monuments and the green tree tops in the valley. Alas! and the next morning the rain is splashing on the window, and the passengers flee along Princes Street before the galloping squalls.

It can not be denied that the original design was faulty and short-sighted, and did not fully profit by the capabilities of the situation. The architect was essentially a town bird, and he laid out the modern city with a view to street scenery, and to street scenery alone. The country did not enter into his plan; he had never lifted his eyes to the hills. If he had so chosen, every street upon the northern slope might have been a noble terrace and commanded an extensive and beautiful view. But the space has been too closely built; many of the houses front the wrong way, intent, like the Man with the Muck-Rake, on what is not worth observation, and standing discourteously back-foremost in the ranks; and, in a word, it is too often only from attic windows, or here and there at a crossing, that you can get a look beyond the city upon its diversified surroundings. But perhaps it is all the more surprising to come suddenly on a corner and see a perspective of a mile or more of falling street, and beyond that woods and villas, and a blue arm of the sea, and the hills upon the farther side.

Fergusson, our Edinburgh poet, Burns's model, once saw a butterfly at the Town Cross; and the sight inspired him with a worthless little ode. This painted countryman, the dandy of the rose garden, looked far abroad in such a humming neighborhood; and you can fancy what moral considerations a youthful poet would supply. But the incident, in a fanciful sort of way, is characteristic of the place. Into no other city does the sight of the country enter so far; if you do not meet a butterfly, you shall certainly catch a glimpse of far-away trees upon your walk; and the place is full of theater tricks in the way of scenery. You peep under an arch, you descend stairs that look as if they would land you in a cellar, you turn to the back window of a grimy tenement in a lane:—and behold! you are face to face with distant and bright prospects. You

turn a corner, and there is the sun going down into the Highland hills. You look down an alley, and see ships tacking for the Baltic.

For the country people to see Edinburgh on her hill-tops, is one thing; it is another for the citizen, from the thick of his affairs, to overlook the country. It should be a genial and ameliorating influence in life; it should prompt good thoughts and remind him of Nature's unconcern: that he can watch from day to day, as he trots officeward, how the Spring green brightens in the wood or the field grows black under a moving plowshare. I have been tempted, in this connection, to deplore the slender faculties of the human race, with its penny whistle of a voice, its dull ears, and its narrow range of sight. If you could see as people are to see in heaven, if you had eyes such as you can fancy for a superior race, if you could take clear note of the objects of vision, not only a few yards, but a few miles from where you stand: —think how agreeably your sight would be entertained, how pleasantly your thoughts would be diversified, as you walked the Edinburgh streets! For you might pause, in some business perplexity, in the midst of the city traffic, and perhaps catch the eye of a shepherd as he sat down to breathe upon a heathery shoulder of the Pentlands; or perhaps some urchin, clambering in a country elm, would put aside the leaves and show you his flushed and rustic visage; or a fisher racing seaward, with the tiller under his elbow, and the sail sounding in the wind, would fling you a salutation from between Anst'er and the May.

To be old is not the same thing as to be picturesque; nor because the Old Town bears a strange physiognomy, does it at all follow that the New Town shall look commonplace. Indeed, apart from antique houses, it is curious how much description would apply commonly to either. The same sudden accidents of ground, a similar dominating site above the plain, and the same superposition of one rank of society over another, are to be observed in both. Thus, the broad and comely approach to Princes Street from the east, lined with hotels and public offices, makes a leap over the gorge of the Low Calton; if you

cast a glance over the parapet, you look direct into that sunless and disreputable confluent of Leith Street; and the same tall houses open upon both thoroughfares. This is only the New Town passing overhead above its own cellars; walking, so to speak, over its own children, as is the way of cities and the human race. But at the Dean Bridge you may behold a spectacle of a more novel order. The river runs at the bottom of a deep valley, among rocks and between gardens; the crest of either bank is occupied by some of the most commodious streets and crescents in the modern city; and a handsome bridge unites the two summits. Over this, every afternoon, private carriages go spinning by, and ladies with card-cases pass to and fro about the duties of society. And yet down below, you may still see, with its mills and foaming weir, the little rural village of Dean. Modern improvement has gone overhead on its high-level viaduct; and the extended city has cleanly overleaped, and left unaltered, what was once the summer retreat of its comfortable citizens. Every town embraces hamlets in its growth; Edinburgh herself has embraced a good few; but it is strange to see one still surviving—and to see it some hundreds of feet below your path. Is it Torre del Greco that is built above buried Herculaneum? Herculaneum was dead at least; but the sun still shines upon the roofs of Dean; the smoke still rises thriftily from its chimneys; the dusty miller comes to his door, looks at the gurgling water, harkens to the turning wheel and the birds about the shed, and perhaps whistles an air of his own to enrich the symphony—for all the world as if Edinburgh were still the old Edinburgh on the Castle Hill, and Dean were still the quietest of hamlets buried a mile or so in the green country.

It is not so long ago since magisterial David Hume lent the authority of his example to the exodus from the Old Town, and took up his new abode in a street which is still (so oddly may a jest become perpetuated) known as Saint David Street. Nor is the town so large but a holiday schoolboy may harry a bird's nest within half a mile of his own door. There are places that still smell of the plow in memory's nostrils. Here, one had heard a

blackbird on a hawthorn; there, another was taken on summer evenings to eat strawberries and cream; and you have seen a waving wheat-field on the site of your present residence. The memories of an Edinburgh boy are but partly memories of the town. I look back with delight on many an escalade of garden walls; many a ramble among lilacs full of piping birds; many an exploration in obscure quarters that were neither town nor country; and I think that both for my companions and myself there was a special interest, a point of romance, and a sentiment as of foreign travel, when we hit in our excursions on the butt end of some former hamlet, and found a few rustic cottages embedded among streets and squares. The tunnel to the Scotland Street Station, the sight of the train shooting out of its dark maw with the two guards upon the brake, the thought of its length and the many ponderous edifices and open thoroughfares above, were certainly things of paramount impressiveness to a young mind. It was a subterranean passage, although of a larger bore than we were accustomed to in Ainsworth's novels; and these two words, "subterranean passage," were in themselves an irresistible attraction, and seemed to bring us nearer in spirit to the heroes we loved and the black rascals we secretly aspired to imitate. To scale the Castle Rock from West Princes Street Gardens, and lay a triumphal hand against the rampart itself, was to taste a high order of romantic pleasure. And there are other sights and exploits which crowd back upon my mind under a very strong illumination of remembered pleasure. But the effect of not one of them all will compare with the discoverer's joy, and the sense of old Time and his slow changes on the face of this earth, with which I explored such corners as Canonmills or Water Lane, or the nugget of cottages at Boroughton Market. They were more rural than the open country, and gave a greater impression of antiquity than the oldest *land* upon the High Street. They too, like Fergusson's butterfly, had a quaint air of having wandered far from their own place; they looked abashed and homely, with their gables and their creeping plants, their outside stairs and running mill-

streams; there were corners that smelt like the end of the country garden where I spent my Aprils; and the people stood to gossip at their doors, as they might have done in Colinton or Cramond.

In a great measure we may, and shall, eradicate this haunting flavor of the country. The last elm is dead in Elm Row; and the villas and the workmen's quarters spread apace on all the borders of the city. We can cut down the trees; we can bury the grass under dead paving-stones; we can drive brisk streets through all our sleepy quarters; and we may forget the stories and playgrounds of our boyhood. But we have some possessions that not even the infuriate zeal of builders can utterly abolish or destroy. Nothing can abolish the hills, unless it be a cataclysm of nature which shall subvert Edinburgh Castle itself and lay all her florid structures in the dust. And as long as we have the hills and the Firth, we have a famous heritage to leave our children. Our windows, at no expense to us, are most artfully stained to represent a landscape. And when the Spring comes round, and the hawthorns begin to flower, and the meadows to smell of young grass, even in the thickest of our streets, the country hill-tops find out a young man's eyes, and set his heart beating for travel and pure air.

CHAPTER VII

THE VILLA QUARTERS

MR. RUSKIN'S denunciation of the New Town of Edinburgh includes, as I have heard it repeated, nearly all the stone and lime we have to show. Many however find a grand air and something settled and imposing in the better parts; and upon many, as I have said, the confusion of styles induces an agreeable stimulation of the mind. But upon the subject of our recent villa architecture, I am frankly ready to mingle my tears with Mr. Ruskin's, and it is a subject which makes one envious of his large declamatory and controversial eloquence.

Day by day, one new villa, one new object of offense, is added to another; all around Newington and Morningside, the dismalest structures keep springing up like mushrooms; the pleasant hills are loaded with them, each impudently squatted in its garden, each roofed and carrying chimneys like a house. And yet a glance of an eye discovers their true character. They are not houses; for they were not designed with a view to human habitation, and the internal arrangements are, as they tell me, fantastically unsuited to the needs of man. They are not buildings; for you can scarcely say a thing is built where every measurement is in clamant disproportion with its neighbor. They belong to no style of art, only to a form of business much to be regretted.

Why should it be cheaper to erect a structure where the size of the windows bears no rational relation to the size of the front? Is there any profit in a misplaced chimney-stalk? Does a hard-working, greedy builder gain more on a monstrosity than on a decent cottage of equal plainness? Frankly, we should say, No. Bricks may be omitted, and green timber employed, in the construction of

even a very elegant design; and there is no reason why a chimney should be made to vent, because it is so situated as to look comely from without. On the other hand, there is a noble way of being ugly: a high-aspiring fiasco like the fall of Lucifer. There are daring and gaudy buildings that manage to be offensive, without being contemptible; and we know that "fools rush in where angels fear to tread." But to aim at making a commonplace villa, and to make it insufferably ugly in each particular; to attempt the homeliest achievement, and to attain the bottom of derided failure; not to have any theory but profit and yet, at an equal expense, to outstrip all competitors in the art of conceiving and rendering permanent deformity; and to do all this in what is, by nature, one of the most agreeable neighborhoods in Britain:—what are we to say, but that this also is a distinction, hard to earn although not greatly worshipful?

Indifferent buildings give pain to the sensitive; but these things offend the plainest taste. It is a danger which threatens the amenity of the town; and as this eruption keeps spreading on our borders, we have ever the farther to walk among unpleasant sights, before we gain the country air. If the population of Edinburgh were a living, autonomous body, it would arise like one man and make night hideous with arson; the builders and their accomplices would be driven to work, like the Jews of yore, with the trowel in one hand and the defensive cutlas in the other; and as soon as one of these masonic wonders had been consummated, right-minded iconoclasts should fall thereon and make an end of it at once.

Possibly these words may meet the eye of a builder or two. It is no use asking them to employ an architect; for that would be to touch them in a delicate quarter, and its use would largely depend on what architect they were minded to call in. But let them get any architect in the world to point out any reasonably well-proportioned villa, not his own design; and let them reproduce that model to satiety.

CHAPTER VIII

THE CALTON HILL

THE east of new Edinburgh is guarded by a craggy hill, of no great elevation, which the town embraces. The old London road runs on one side of it; while the New Approach, leaving it on the other hand, completes the circuit. You mount by stairs in a cutting of the rock to find yourself in a field of monuments. Dugald Stewart has the honors of situation and architecture; Burns is memorialized lower down upon a spur; Lord Nelson, as befits a sailor, gives his name to the topgallant of the Calton Hill. This latter erection has been differently and yet, in both cases, aptly compared to a telescope and a butter-churn; comparisons apart, it ranks among the vilest of men's handiworks. But the chief feature is an unfinished range of columns, "the Modern Ruin" as it has been called, an imposing object from far and near, and giving Edinburgh, even from the sea, that false air of a Modern Athens which has earned for her so many slighting speeches. It was meant to be a National Monument; and its present state is a very suitable monument to certain national characteristics. The old Observatory—a quaint brown building on the edge of the steep—and the new Observatory—a classical edifice with a dome—occupy the central portion of the summit. All these are scattered on a green turf, browsed over by some sheep.

The scene suggests reflections on fame and on man's injustice to the dead. You see Dugald Stewart rather more handsomely commemorated than Burns. Immediately below, in the Canongate churchyard, lies Robert Fergusson, Burns's master in his art, who died insane while yet a stripling; and if Dugald Stewart has been somewhat too boisterously acclaimed, the Edinburgh poet, on the

other hand, is most unrighteously forgotten. The votaries of Burns, a crew too common in all ranks in Scotland and more remarkable for number than discretion, eagerly suppress all mention of the lad who handed to him the poetic impulse and, up to the time when he grew famous, continued to influence him in his manner and the choice of subjects. Burns himself not only acknowledged his debt in a fragment of autobiography, but erected a tomb over the grave in Canongate churchyard. This was worthy of an artist, but it was done in vain; and although I think I have read nearly all the biographies of Burns, I can not remember one in which the modesty of nature was not violated, or where Fergusson was not sacrificed to the credit of his follower's originality. There is a kind of gaping admiration that would fain roll Shakespeare and Bacon into one, to have a bigger thing to gape at; and a class of men who can not edit one author without disparaging all others. They are indeed mistaken if they think to please the great originals; and whoever puts Fergusson right with fame, can not do better than dedicate his labors to the memory of Burns, who will be the best delighted of the dead.

Of all places for a view, this Calton Hill is perhaps the best; since you can see the Castle, which you lose from the Castle, and Arthur's Seat, which you can not see from Arthur's Seat. It is the place to stroll on one of those days of sunshine and east wind which are so common in our more than temperate summer. The breeze comes off the sea, with a little of the freshness, and that touch of chill, peculiar to the quarter, which is delightful to certain very ruddy organizations and greatly the reverse to the majority of mankind. It brings with it a faint, floating haze, a cunning decolorizer, although not thick enough to obscure outlines near at hand. But the haze lies more thickly to windward at the far end of Musselburgh Bay; and over the Links of Aberlady and Berwick Law and the hump of the Bass Rock it assumes the aspect of a bank of thin sea fog.

Immediately underneath upon the south, you command the yards of the High School, and the towers and courts

of the new Jail—a large place, castellated to the extent of folly, standing by itself on the edge of a steep cliff, and often joyfully hailed by tourists as the Castle. In the one, you may perhaps see female prisoners taking exercise like a string of nuns; in the other, schoolboys running at play and their shadows keeping step with them. From the bottom of the valley, a gigantic chimney rises almost to the level of the eye, a taller and a shapelier edifice than Nelson's Monument. Look a little farther, and there is Holyrood Palace, with its Gothic frontal and ruined abbey, and the red sentry pacing smartly to and fro before the door like a mechanical figure in a panorama. By way of an outpost, you can single out the little peak-roofed lodge, over which Rizzio's murderers made their escape and where Queen Mary herself, according to gossip, bathed in white wine to entertain her loveliness. Behind and overhead, lie the Queen's Park, from Muschat's Cairn to Dumbiedykes, St. Margaret's Loch, and the long wall of Salisbury Crags: and thence, by knoll and rocky bulwark and precipitous slope, the eye rises to the top of Arthur's Seat, a hill for magnitude, a mountain in virtue of its bold design. This upon your left. Upon the right, the roofs and spires of the Old Town climb one above another to where the citadel prints its broad bulk and jagged crown of bastions on the western sky.—Perhaps it is now one in the afternoon; and at the same instant of time, a ball rises to the summit of Nelson's flagstaff close at hand, and, far away, a puff of smoke followed by a report bursts from the half-moon battery at the Castle. This is the time-gun by which people set their watches, as far as the sea coast or in hill farms upon the Pentlands. —To complete the view, the eye enfilades Princes Street, black with traffic, and has a broad look over the valley between the Old Town and the New: here, full of railway trains and stepped over by the high North Bridge upon its many columns, and there, green with trees and gardens.

On the north, the Calton Hill is neither so abrupt in itself nor has it so exceptional an outlook; and yet even here it commands a striking prospect. A gully separates it from the New Town. This is Greenside, where witches

were burned and tournaments held in former days. Down that almost precipitous bank Bothwell launched his horse, and so first, as they say, attracted the bright eyes of Mary. It is now tessellated with sheets and blankets out to dry, and the sound of people beating carpets is rarely absent. Beyond all this, the suburbs run out to Leith; Leith camps on the seaside with her forest of masts; Leith roads are full of ships at anchor; the sun picks out the white pharos upon Inchkeith Island; the Firth extends on either hand from the Ferry to the May; the towns of Fifeshire sit, each in its bank of blowing smoke, along the opposite coast; and the hills enclose the view, except to the farthest east, where the haze of the horizon rests upon the open sea. There lies the road to Norway: a dear road for Sir Patrick Spens and his Scots Lords; and yonder smoke on the hither side of Largo Law is Aberdour, from whence they sailed to seek a queen for Scotland:—

"Oh lang, lang, may the ladies sit,
Wi' their fans into their hand,
Or e'er they see Sir Patrick Spens
Come sailing to the land!"

The sight of the sea, even from a city, will bring thoughts of storm and sea disaster. The sailors' wives of Leith and the fisherwomen of Cockenzie, not sitting languorously with fans, but crowding to the tail of the harbor with a shawl about their ears, may still look vainly for brave Scotsmen who will return no more, or boats that have gone on their last fishing. Since Sir Patrick sailed from Aberdour, what a multitude have gone down in the North Sea! Yonder is Auldhame, where the London smack went ashore and wreckers cut the rings from ladies' fingers; and a few miles round Fife Ness is the fatal Inchcape, now a star of guidance; and the lee shore to the west of the Inchcape, is that Forfarshire coast where Muckle-backet sorrowed for his son.

These are the main features of the scene roughly sketched. How they are all tilted by the inclination of the ground, how each stands out in delicate relief against the rest, what manifold detail, and play of sun and

shadow, animate and accentuate the picture, is a matter for a person on the spot, and turning swiftly on his heels, to grasp and bind together in one comprehensive look. It is the character of such a prospect, to be full of change and of things moving. The multiplicity embarrasses the eye; and the mind, among s nuch, suffers itself to grow absorbed with single point. You remark a tree in a hedgerow, or follow a cart along a country road. You turn to the city, and see children, dwarfed by distance into pigmies, at play about suburban doorsteps; you have a glimpse upon a thoroughfare where people are densely moving; you note ridge after ridge of chimney-stacks running downhill one behind another, and church spires rising bravely from the sea of roofs. At one of the innumerable windows, you watch a figure moving; on one of the multitude of roofs, you watch clambering chimney-sweeps. The wind takes a run and scatters the smoke; bells are heard, far and near, faint and loud, to tell the hour; or perhaps a bird goes dipping evenly over the housetops, like a gull across the waves. And here you are in the mean time, on this pastoral hillside, among nibbling sheep and looked upon by monumental buildings.

Return thither on some clear, dark, moonless night, with a ring of frost in the air, and only a star or two set sparsely in the vault of heaven; and you will find a sight as stimulating as the hoariest summit of the Alps. The solitude seems perfect; the patient astronomer, flat on his back under the Observatory dome and spying heaven's secrets, is your only neighbor; and yet from all around you there come up the dull hum of the city, the tramp of countless people marching out of time, the rattle of carriages and the continuous keen jingle of the tramway bells. An hour or so before, the gas was turned on; lamplighters scoured the city; in every house, from kitchen to attic, the windows kindled and gleamed forth into the dusk. And so now, although the town lies blue and darkling on her hills, innumerable spots of the bright element shine far and near along the pavements and upon the high façades. Moving lights of the railway pass and repass below the stationary lights upon the bridge. Lights burn in the

Jail. Lights burn high up in the tall *lands* and on the Castle turrets, they burn low down in Greenside or along the Park. They run out one beyond the other into the dark country. They walk in a procession down to Leith, and shine singly far along Leith Pier. Thus, the plan of the city and her suburbs is mapped out upon the ground of blackness, as when a child pricks a drawing full of pinholes and exposes it before a candle; not the darkest night of winter can conceal her high station and fanciful design; every evening in the year she proceeds to illuminate herself in honor of her own beauty; and as if to complete the scheme—or rather as if some prodigal Pharaoh were beginning to extend to the adjacent sea and country—half-way over to Fife, there is an outpost of light upon Inchkeith, and far to seaward, yet another on the May.

And while you are looking, across upon the Castle Hill, the drums and bugles begin to recall the scattered garrison; the air thrills with the sound; the bugles sing aloud; and the last rising flourish mounts and melts into the darkness like a star; a martial swan song, fitly rounding in the labors of the day.

CHAPTER IX

WINTER AND NEW YEAR

THE Scots dialect is singularly rich in terms of reproach against the winter wind. *Snell, blae, nirly,* and *scowthering,* are four of these significant vocables; they are all words that carry a shiver with them; and for my part, as I see them alined before me on the page, I am persuaded that a big wind comes tearing over the Firth from Burntisland and the northern hills; I think I can hear it howl in the chimney, and as I set my face northward, feel its smarting kisses on my cheek. Even in the names of places there is often a desolate, inhospitable sound; and I remember two from the near neighborhood of Edinburgh, Cauldhame and Blaw-weary, that would promise but starving comfort to their inhabitants. The inclemency of heaven, which has thus endowed the language of Scotland with words, has also largely modified the spirit of its poetry. Both poverty and a northern climate teach men the love of the hearth and the sentiment of the family; and the latter, in its own right, inclines a poet to the praise of strong waters. In Scotland, all our singers have a stave or two for blazing fires and stout potations:—to get indoors out of the wind and to swallow something hot to the stomach, are benefits so easily appreciated where they dwelt!

And this is not only so in country districts where the shepherd must wade in the snow all day after his flock, but in Edinburgh itself, and nowhere more apparently stated than in the works of our Edinburgh poet, Fergusson. He was a delicate youth, I take it, and willingly slunk from the robustious winter to an inn fireside. Love was absent from his life, or only present, if you prefer, in such a form that even the least serious of Burns's amourettes was ennobling by comparison; and so there is nothing to temper

the sentiment of indoor revelry which pervades the poor boy's verses. Although it is characteristic of his native town, and the manners of its youth to the present day, this spirit has perhaps done something to restrict his popularity. He recalls a supper-party pleasantly with something akin to tenderness; and sounds the praises of the act of drinking as if it were virtuous, or at least witty, in itself. The kindly jar, the warm atmosphere of tavern parlors, and the revelry of lawyer's clerks, do not offer by themselves the materials of a rich existence. It was not choice, so much as external fate, that kept Fergusson in this round of sordid pleasures. A Scot of poetic temperament, and without religious exaltation, drops as if by nature into the public-house. The picture may not be pleasing; but what else is a man to do in this dog's weather?

To none but those who have themselves suffered the thing in the body, can the gloom and depression of our Edinburgh winters be brought home. For some constitutions there is something almost physically disgusting in the bleak ugliness of easterly weather; the wind wearies, the sickly sky depresses them; and they turn back from their walk to avoid the aspect of the unrefulgent sun going down among perturbed and pallid mists. The days are so short that a man does much of his business, and certainly all his pleasure, by the haggard glare of gas lamps. The roads are as heavy as a fallow. People go by, so drenched and draggle-tailed that I have often wondered how they found the heart to undress. And meantime the wind whistles through the town as if it were an open meadow; and if you lie awake all night, you hear it shrieking and raving overhead with a noise of shipwrecks and of falling houses. In a word, life is so unsightly that there are times when the heart turns sick in a man's inside; and the look of a tavern, or the thought of the warm, fire-lit study, is like a touch of land to one who has been long struggling with the seas.

As the weather hardens toward frost, the world begins to improve for Edinburgh people. We enjoy superb, sub-arctic sunsets, with the profile of the city stamped in indigo

upon a sky of luminous green. The wind may still be cold, but there is a briskness in the air that stirs good blood. People do not all look equally sour and downcast. They fall into two divisions: one, the knight of the blue face and hollow paunch, whom Winter has gotten by the vitals; the other well lined with New-year's fare, conscious of the touch of cold on his periphery, but stepping through it by the glow of his internal fires. Such an one I remember, triply cased in grease, whom no extremity of temperature could vanquish. "Well," would be his jovial salutation, "here's a sneezer!" And the look of these warm fellows is tonic, and upholds their drooping fellow townsmen. There is yet another class who do not depend on corporal advantages, but support the winter in virtue of a brave and merry heart. One shivering evening, cold enough for frost but with too high a wind, and a little past sundown, when the lamps were beginning to enlarge their circles in the growing dusk, a brace of barefoot lassies were seen coming eastward in the teeth of the wind. If the one was as much as nine, the other was certainly not more than seven. They were miserably clad; and the pavement was so cold, you would have thought no one could lay a naked foot on it unflinching. Yet they came along waltzing, if you please, while the elder sang a tune to give them music. The person who saw this, and whose heart was full of bitterness at the moment, pocketed a reproof which has been of use to him ever since, and which he now hands on, with his good wishes, to the reader.

At length, Edinburgh, with her satellite hills and all the sloping country, are sheeted up in white. If it has happened in the dark hours, nurses pluck their children out of bed and run with them to some commanding window, whence they may see the change that has been worked upon earth's face. "A' the hills are covered wi' snaw," they sing, "and Winter's noo come fairly!" And the children, marveling at the silence and the white landscape, find a spell appropriate to the season in the words. The reverberation of the snow increases the pale daylight, and brings all objects nearer the eye. The pentlands are

smooth and glittering, with here and there the black ribbon of a dry-stone dyke, and here and there, if there be wind, a cloud of blowing snow upon a shoulder. The Firth seems a leaden creek, that a man might almost jump across, between well-powdered Lothian and well-powdered Fife. And the effect is not, as in other cities, a thing of half a day; the streets are soon trodden black, but the country keeps its virgin white; and you have only to lift your eyes and look over miles of country snow. An indescribable cheerfulness breathes about the city; and the well-fed heart sits lightly and beats gaily in the bosom. It is New Year's weather.

New Year's Day, the great national festival, is a time of family expansions and of deep carousal. Sometimes, by a sore stroke of fate for this Calvinistic people, the year's anniversary falls upon a Sunday, when the public houses are inexorably closed, when singing and even whistling is banished from our homes and highways, and the oldest toper feels called upon to go to church. Thus pulled about, as if between two loyalties, the Scots have to decide many nice cases of conscience, and ride the marches narrowly between the weekly and the annual observance. A party of convivial musicians, next door to a friend of mine, hung suspended in this manner on the brink of their diversions. From ten o'clock on Sunday night, my friend heard them tuning their instruments: and as the hour of liberty drew near, each must have had his music open, his bow in readiness across the fiddle, his foot already raised to mark the time, and his nerves braced for execution; for hardly had the twelfth stroke sounded from the earliest steeple, before they had launched forth into a secular bravura.

Currant loaf is now popular eating in all households. For weeks before the great morning, confectioners display stacks of Scots bun—a dense, black substance, inimical to life—and full moons of shortbread adorned with mottos of peel or sugar-plum, in honor of the season and the family affections. "Frae Auld Reekie," "A guid New Year to ye a'," "For the Auld Folk at Hame," are among the most favored of these devices. Can you not see the

carrier, after half a day's journey on pinching hill roads, draw up before a cottage in Teviotdale, or perhaps in Manor Glen among the rowans, and the old people receiving the parcel with moist eyes and a prayer for Jock or Jean in the city? For at this season, on the threshold of another year of calamity and stubborn conflict, men feel a need to draw closer the links that unite them; they reckon the number of their friends, like allies before a war; and the prayers grow longer in the morning as the absent are recommended by name into God's keeping.

On the day itself, the shops are all shut as on a Sunday; only taverns, toy-shops, and other holiday magazines, keep open doors. Every one looks for his handsel. The postman and the lamplighters have left, at every house in their districts, a copy of vernacular verses, asking and thanking in a breath; and it is characteristic of Scotland that these verses may have sometimes a touch of reality in detail or sentiment and a measure of strength in the handling. All over the town, you may see comforter'd schoolboys hasting to squander ther half-crowns. There are an infinity of visits to be paid; all the world is in the street, except the daintier classes; the sacramental greeting is heard upon all sides; Auld Lang Syne is much in people's mouths; and whisky and shortbread are staple articles of consumption. From an early hour a stranger will be impressed by the number of drunken men; and by afternoon drunkenness has spread to the women. With some classes of society, it is as much a matter of duty to drink hard on New Year's Day as to go to church on Sunday. Some have been saving their wages for perhaps a month to do the season honor. Many carry a whisky bottle in their pocket, which they will press with embarrassing effusion on a perfect stranger. It is not expedient to risk one's body in a cab, or not, at least, until after a prolonged study of the driver. The streets, which are thronged from end to end, become a place for delicate pilotage. Singly or arm in arm, some speechless, others noisy and quarrelsome, the votaries of the New Year go meandering in and out and cannoning one against another; and now and again, one falls and lies as he has fallen. Before night, so many have gone to bed

or the police office, that the streets seem almost clearer. And as *guisards* and *first-footers* are now not much seen except in country places, when once the New Year has been rung in and proclaimed at the Tron railings, the festivities begin to find their way indoors and something like quiet returns upon the town. But think, in these piled *lands,* of all the senseless snorers, all the broken heads and empty pockets!

Of old, Edinburgh University was the scene of heroic snowballing; and one riot obtained the epic honors of military intervention. But the great generation, I am afraid, is at an end; and even during my own college days, the spirit appreciably declined. Skating and sliding, on the other hand, are honored more and more; and curling, being a creature of the national genius, is little likely to be disregarded. The patriotism that leads a man to eat Scotch bun will scarce desert him at the curling-pond. Edinburgh, with its long, steep pavements, is the proper home of sliders; many a happy urchin can slide the whole way to school; and the profession of errand boy is transformed into a holiday amusement. As for skating, there is scarce any city so handsomely provided. Duddingston Loch lies under the abrupt southern side of Arthur's Seat; in summer a shield of blue, with swans sailing from the reeds; in winter, a field of ringing ice. The village church sits above it on a green promontory; and the village smoke rises from among goodly trees. At the church gates, is the historical *jougs,* a place of penance for the neck of detected sinners, and the historical *louping-on stane,* from which Dutch-built lairds and farmers climbed into the saddle. Here Prince Charlie slept before the battle of Prestonpans; and here Deacon Brodie, or one of his gang, stole a plow coulter before the burglary in Chessel's Court. On the opposite side of the loch, the ground rises to Craigmillar Castle, a place friendly to Stuart Mariolaters. It is worth a climb, even in summer, to look down upon the loch from Arthur's Seat; but it is tenfold more so on a day of skating. The surface is thick with people moving easily and swiftly and leaning over at a thousand graceful inclinations; the crowd opens and closes, and keeps moving

through itself like water; and the ice rings to half a mile away with the flying steel. As night draws on, the single figures melt into the dusk, until only an obscure stir, and coming and going of black clusters, is visible upon the loch. A little longer, and the first torch is kindled and begins to flit rapidly across the ice in a ring of yellow reflection, and this is followed by another and another, until the whole field is full of skimming lights.

CHAPTER X

TO THE PENTLAND HILLS

ON THREE sides of Edinburgh, the country slopes downward from the city, here to the sea, there to the fat farms of Haddington, there to the mineral fields of Linlithgow. On the south alone, it keeps rising until it not only outtops the Castle but looks down on Arthur's Seat. The character of the neighborhood is pretty strongly marked by a scarcity of hedges; by many stone walls of varying height; by a fair amount of timber, some of it well grown, but apt to be of a bushy, northern profile and poor in foliage; by here and there a little river, Esk or Leith or Almond, busily journeying in the bottom of its glens; and from almost every point, by a peep of the sea or the hills. There is no lack of variety, and yet most of the elements are common to all parts; and the southern district is alone distinguished by considerable summits and a wide view.

From Boroughmuirhead, where the Scottish army encamped before Flodden, the road descends a long hill, at the bottom of which and just as it is preparing to mount up on the other side, it passes a toll-bar and issues at once into the open country. Even as I write these words, they are becoming antiquated in the progress of events, and the chisels are tinkling on a new row of houses. The builders have at length adventured beyond the toll which held them in respect so long, and proceed to career in these fresh pastures like a herd of colts turned loose. As Lord Beaconsfield proposed to hang an architect by way of stimulation, a man, looking on these doomed meads, imagines a similar example to deter the builders; for it seems as if it must come to an open fight at last to preserve a corner of green country unbedeviled. And here, appropriately enough, there stood in old days a crow-haunted gibbet, with two bodies hanged in chains. I used to be shown,

when a child, a flat stone in the roadway to which the gibbet had been fixed. People of a willing fancy were persuaded, and sought to persuade others, that this stone was never dry. And no wonder, they would add, for the two men had only stolen fourpence between them.

For about two miles the road climbs upward, a long hot walk in summer time. You reach the summit at a place where four ways meet, beside the toll at Fairmilehead. The spot is breezy and agreeable both in name and aspect. The hills are close by across a valley: Kirk Yetton, with its long, upright scars visible as far as Fife, and Allermuir the tallest on this side: with wood and tilled field running high up on their borders, and haunches all molded into innumerable glens and shelvings and variegated with heather and fern. The air comes briskly and sweetly off the hills, pure from the elevation and rustically scented by the upland plants; and even at the toll you may hear the curlew calling on its mate. At certain seasons, when the gulls desert their surfy forelands, the birds of sea and mountain hunt and scream together in the same field by Fairmilehead. The winged, wild things intermix their wheelings, the sea-birds skim the tree tops and fish among the furrows of the plow. These little craft of air are at home in all the world, so long as they cruise in their own element; and, like sailors, ask but food and water from the shores they coast.

Below, over a stream, the road passes Bow Bridge, now a dairy-farm, but once a distillery of whisky. It chanced, some time in the past century, that the distiller was on terms of good-fellowship with the visiting officer of excise. The latter was of an easy, friendly disposition, and a master of convivial arts. Now and again, he had to walk out of Edinburgh to measure the distiller's stock; and although it was agreeable to find his business lead him in a friend's direction, it was unfortunate that the friend should be a loser by his visits. Accordingly, when he got about the level of Fairmilehead, the gager would take his flute, without which he never traveled, from his pocket, fit it together, and set manfully to playing, as if for his own delectation and inspired by the beauty of the scene. His

favorite air, it seems, was "Over the hills and far away." At the first note, the distiller pricked his ears. A flute at Fairmilehead? and playing "Over the hills and far away"? This must be his friendly enemy, the gager. Instantly, horses were harnessed, and sundry barrels of whisky were got upon a cart, driven at a gallop round Hill End, and buried in the mossy glen behind Kirk Yetton. In the same breath, you may be sure, a fat fowl was put to the fire, and the whitest napery prepared for the back parlor. A little after, the gager, having had his fill of music for the moment, came strolling down with the most innocent air imaginable, and found the good people at Bow Bridge taken entirely unawares by his arrival, but none the less glad to see him. The distiller's liquor and the gager's flute would combine to speed the moments of digestion; and when both were somewhat mellow, they would wind up the evening with "Over the hills and far away," to an accompaniment of knowing glances. And at least, there is a smuggling story, with original and half-idyllic features.

A little further, the road to the right passes an upright stone in a field. The country people call it General Kay's monument. According to them, an officer of that name had perished there in battle at some indistinct period before the beginning of history. The date is reassuring; for I think cautious writers are silent on the General's exploits. But the stone is connected with one of those remarkable tenures of land which linger on into the modern world from Feudalism. Whenever the reigning sovereign passes by, a certain landed proprietor is held bound to climb on to the top, trumpet in hand, and sound a flourish according to the measure of his knowledge in that art. Happily for a respectable family, crowned heads have no great business in the Pentland Hills. But the story lends a character of comicality to the stone; and the passer-by will sometimes chuckle to himself.

The district is dear to the superstitious. Hard by, at the back gate of Comiston, a belated carter beheld a lady in white, "with the most beautiful, clear shoes upon her feet," who looked upon him in a very ghastly manner and

then vanished; and just in front is the Hunters' Tryst, once a roadside inn, and not so long ago haunted by the devil in person. Satan led the inhabitants a pitiful existence. He shook the four corners of the building with lamentable outcries, beat at the doors and windows, overthrew crockery in the dead hours of the morning, and danced unholy dances on the roof. Every kind of spiritual disinfectant was put in requisition; chosen ministers were summoned out of Edinburgh and prayed by the hour; pious neighbors sat up all night making a noise of psalmody; but Satan minded them no more than the wind about the hilltops; and it was only after years of persecution, that he left the Hunters' Tryst in peace to occupy himself with the remainder of mankind. What with General Kay, and the white lady, and this singular visitation, the neighborhood offers great facilities to the makers of sun-myths; and without exactly casting in one's lot with that disenchanting school of writers, one can not help hearing a good deal of the water wind in the last story. "That nicht," says Burns, in one of his happiest moments,—

> "That nicht a child might understand
> The deil had business on his hand."

And if people sit up all night in lone places on the hills, with Bibles and tremulous psalms, they will be apt to hear some of the most fiendish noises in the world; the wind will beat on doors and dance upon roofs for them, and make the hills howl around their cottage with a clamor like the judgment-day.

The road goes down through another valley, and then finally begins to scale the main slope of the Pentlands. A bouquet of old trees stands round a white farmhouse; and from a neighboring dell, you can see smoke rising and leaves ruffling in the breeze. Straight above, the hills climb a thousand feet into the air. The neighborhood, about the time of lambs, is clamorous with the bleating of flocks; and you will be awakened, in the gray of early summer mornings, by the barking of a dog or the voice of a shepherd shouting to the echoes. This, with the hamlet lying behind unseen, is Swanston.

The place in the dell is immediately connected with the city. Long ago, this sheltered field was purchased by the Edinburgh magistrates for the sake of the springs that rise or gather there. After they had built their water-house and laid their pipes, it occurred to them that the place was suitable for junketing. Once entertained, with jovial magistrates and public funds, the idea led speedily to accomplishment; and Edinburgh could soon boast of a municipal Pleasure House. The dell was turned into a garden; and on the knoll that shelters it from the plain and the sea winds, they built a cottage looking to the hills. They brought crockets and gargoyles from old St. Giles's, which they were then restoring, and disposed them on the gables and over the door and about the garden; and the quarry which had supplied them with building material, they draped with clematis and carpeted with beds of roses. So much for the pleasure of the eye; for creature comfort, they made a capacious cellar in the hillside and fitted it with bins of the hewn stone. In process of time, the trees grew higher and gave shade to the cottage, and the evergreens sprang up and turned the dell into a thicket. There, purple magistrates relaxed themselves from the pursuit of municipal ambition; cocked hats paraded soberly about the garden and in and out among the hollies; authoritative canes drew ciphering upon the path; and at night, from high up on the hills, a shepherd saw lighted windows through the foliage and heard the voice of city dignitaries raised in song.

The farm is older. It was first a grange of Whitekirk Abbey, tilled and inhabited by rosy friars. Thence, after the Reformation, it passed into the hands of a true-blue Protestant family. During the Covenanting troubles, when a night conventicle was held upon the Pentlands, the farm doors stood hospitably open till the morning; the dresser was laden with cheese and bannocks, milk and brandy; and the worshipers kept slipping down from the hill between two exercises, as couples visit the supper-room between two dances of a modern ball. In the Forty-Five, some foraging Highlanders from Prince Charlie's army fell upon Swanston in the dawn. The great-grandfather

of the late farmer was then a little child; him they awakened by plucking the blankets from his bed, and he remembered, when he was an old man, their truculent looks and uncouth speech. The churn stood full of cream in the dairy, and with this they made their brose in high delight. "It was braw brose," said one of them. At last they made off, laden like camels with their booty; and Swanson Farm has lain out of the way of history from that time forward. I do not know what may be yet in store for it. On dark days, when the mist runs low upon the hill, the house has a gloomy air as if suitable for private tragedy. But in hot July, you can fancy nothing more perfect than the garden, laid out in alleys and arbors and bright, old-fashioned flower-plots, and ending in a miniature ravine, all trellis-work and moss and tinkling waterfall, and housed from the sun under fathoms of broad foliage.

The hamlet behind is one of the least considerable of hamlets, and consists of a few cottages on a green beside a burn. Some of them (a strange thing in Scotland) are models of internal neatness; the beds adorned with patchwork, the shelves arrayed with window-pattern plates, the floors and tables bright with scrubbing or pipe-clay, and the very kettle polished like silver. It is the sign of a contented old age in country places, where there is little matter for gossip and no street sights. Housework becomes an art; and at evening, when the cottage interior shines and twinkles in the glow of the fire, the housewife folds her hands and contemplates her finished picture; the snow and the wind may do their worst, she has made herself a pleasant corner in the world. The city might be a thousand miles away, and yet it was from close by that Mr. Bough painted the distant view of Edinburgh, which has been engraved for this collection; and you have only to look at the etching,[1] to see how near it is at hand. But hills and hill people are not easily sophisticated; and if you walk out here on a summer Sunday, it is as like as not the shepherd may set his dogs upon you. But keep an unmoved countenance: they look formidable at the charge,

[1] First Edition. Seeley, Jackson & Halliday. London, 1879

but their hearts are in the right place, and they will only bark and sprawl about you on the grass, unmindful of their master's excitations.

Kirk Yetton forms the northeastern angle of the range; thence, the Pentlands trend off to south and west. From the summit you look over a great expanse of champaign sloping to the sea, and behold a large variety of distant hills. There are the hills of Fife, the hills of Peebles, the Lammermoors and the Ochils, more or less mountainous in outline, more or less blue with distance. Of the Pentlands themselves, you see a field of wild heathery peaks with a pond gleaming in the midst; and to that side the view is as desolate as if you were looking into Galloway or Applecross. To turn to the other is like a piece of travel. Far out in the lowlands Edinburgh shows herself, making a great smoke on clear days and spreading her suburbs about her for miles; the Castle rises darkly in the midst, and close by, Arthur's Seat makes a bold figure in the landscape. All around, cultivated fields, and woods, and smoking villages, and white country roads, diversify the uneven surface of the land. Trains crawl slowly abroad upon the railway lines; little ships are tacking in the Firth; the shadow of a mountainous cloud, as large as a parish, travels before the wind; the wind itself ruffles the wood and standing corn, and sends pulses of varying color across the landscape. So you sit, like Jupiter on Olympus, and look down from afar upon men's life. The city is as silent as a city of the dead: from all its humming thoroughfares, not a voice, not a footfall, reaches you upon the hill. The sea-surf, the cries of plowmen, the streams and the mill-wheels, the birds and the wind, keep up an animated concert through the plain; from farm to farm, dogs and crowing cocks contend together in defiance; and yet from this Olympian station, except for the whispering rumor of a train, the world has fallen into a dead silence, and the business of town and country grown voiceless in your ears. A crying hill-bird, the bleat of a sheep, a wind singing in the dry grass, seem not so much to interrupt, as to accompany, the stillness; but to the spiritual ear, the whole scene makes a music at once

human and rural, and discourses pleasant reflections on the destiny of man. The spiry habitable city, ships, the divided fields, and browsing herds, and the straight highways, tell visibly of man's active and comfortable ways; and you may be never so laggard and never so unimpressionable, but there is something in the view that spirits up your blood and puts you in the vein for cheerful labor.

Immediately below is Fairmilehead, a spot of roof and a smoking chimney, where two roads, no thicker than pack-thread, intersect beside a hanging wood. If you are fanciful, you will be reminded of the gager in the story. And the thought of this old exciseman, who once lipped and fingered on his pipe and uttered clear notes from it in the mountain air, and the words of the song he affected, carry your mind "Over the hills and far away" to distant countries; and you have a vision of Edinburgh, not as you see her, in the midst of a little neighborhood, but as a boss upon the round world with all Europe and the deep sea for her surroundings. For every place is a center to the earth, whence highways radiate or ships set sail for foreign ports; the limit of a parish is not more imaginary than the frontier of an empire; and as a man sitting at home in his cabinet and swiftly writing books, so a city sends abroad an influence and a portrait of herself. There is no Edinburgh emigrant, far or near, from China to Peru, but he or she carries some lively pictures of the mind, some sunset behind the Castle cliffs, some snow scene, some maze of city lamps, indelible in the memory and delightful to study in the intervals of toil. For any such, if this book fall in their way, here are a few more home pictures. It would be pleasant, if they should recognize a house where they had dwelt, or a walk that they had taken.

EDINBURGH STUDENTS IN 1824

ON THE 2nd of January, 1824, was issued the prospectus of the *Lapsus Linguæ; or, the College Tatler;* and on the 7th the first number appeared. On Friday the 2nd of April "*Mr. Tatler* became speechless." Its history was not all one success; for the editor (who applies to himself the words of Iago, "I am nothing if I am not critical") overstepped the bounds of caution, and found himself seriously embroiled with the powers that were. There appeared in No. xvi. a most bitter satire upon Sir John Leslie, in which he was compared to Falstaff, charged with puffing himself, and very prettily censured for publishing only the first volume of a class-book, and making all purchasers pay for both. Sir John Leslie took up the matter angrily, visited Carfrae the publisher, and threatened him with an action, till he was forced to turn the hapless *Lapsus* out of doors. The maltreated periodical found shelter in the shop of Huie, Infirmary Street; and No. xvii. was duly issued from the new office. No. xvii. beheld *Mr. Tatler's* humiliation, in which, with fulsome apology and not very credible assurances of respect and admiration, he disclaims the article in question, and advertises a new issue of No. xvi. with all objectionable matter omitted. This, with pleasing euphemism, he terms in a later advertisement, "a new and improved edition." This was the only remarkable adventure of *Mr. Tatler's* brief existence; unless we consider as such a silly Chaldee manuscript in imitation of *Blackwood,* and a letter of reproof from a divinity student on the impiety of the same dull effusion. He laments the near approach of his end in pathetic terms, "How shall we summon up sufficient courage," says he, "to look for the last time on our

beloved little devil and his estimable proof-sheet? How shall we be able to pass No. 14 Infirmary Street and feel that all its attractions are over? How shall we bid farewell forever to that excellent man, with the long great-coat, wooden leg and wooden board, who acts as our representative at the gate of *Alma Mater?"* But alas! he had no choice: *Mr. Tatler,* whose career, he says himself, had been successful, passed peacefully away, and has ever since humbly implored "the bringing home of bell and burial."

Alter et idem. A very different affair was the *Lapsus Linguæ* from the *Edinburgh University Magazine.* The two prospectuses alone, laid side by side, would indicate the march of luxury and the repeal of the paper duty. The penny biweekly broadside of session 1823-4 was almost wholly dedicated to Momus. Epigrams, pointless letters, amorous verses, and University grievances are the continual burden of the song. But *Mr. Tatler* was not without a vein of hearty humor; and his pages afford what is much better: to wit, a good picture of student life as it then was. The students of those polite days insisted on retaining their hats in the class-room. There was a cab-stance in front of the College; and "Carriage Entrance" was posted above the main arch, on what the writer pleases to call "coarse, unclassic boards." The benches of the "Speculative" then, as now, were red; but all other Societies (the "Dialectic" is the only survivor) met down-stairs, in some rooms of which it is pointedly said that "nothing else could conveniently be made of them." However horrible these dungeons may have been, it is certain that they were paid for, and that far too heavily for the taste of session 1823-4, which found enough calls upon its purse for porter and toasted cheese at Ambrose's, or cranberry tarts and ginger-wine at Doull's. Dueling was still a possibility; so much so that when two medicals fell to fisticuffs in Adam Square, it was seriously hinted that single combat would be the result. Last and most wonderful of all, Gall and Spurzheim were in every one's mouth; and the Law student, after having exhausted Byron's poetry and Scott's novels, informed the ladies of his belief in phrenology. In the present day

he would dilate on *"Red as a rose is she,"* and then mention that he attends Old Greyfriars', as a tacit claim to intellectual superiority. I do not know that the advance is much.

But *Mr. Tatler's* best performances were three short papers in which he hit off pretty smartly the idiosyncrasies of the *"Divinity,"* the *"Medical,"* and the *"Law,"* of session 1823-4. The fact that there was no notice of the *"Arts"* seems to suggest that they stood in the same intermediate position as they do now—the epitome of student-kind. *Mr. Tatler's* satire is, on the whole, good-humored, and has not grown superannuated in *all* its limbs. His descriptions may limp at some points, but there are certain broad traits that apply equally well to session 1870-71. He shows us the *Divinity* of the period—tall, pale, slender —his collar greasy, and his coat bare about the seams— "his white neckcloth serving four days, and regularly turned the third,"—"the rim of his hat deficient in wool," —and "a weighty volume of theology under his arm." He was the man to buy cheap "a snuff-box, or a dozen of pencils, or a six-bladed knife, or a quarter of a hundred quills," at any of the public salesrooms. He was noted for cheap purchases, and for exceeding the legal tender in halfpence. He haunted "the darkest and remotest corner of the Theater Gallery." He was to be seen issuing from "aerial lodging-houses." Withal, says mine author, "there were many good points about him: he paid his landlady's bill, read his Bible, went twice to church on Sunday, seldom swore, was not often tipsy, and bought the *Lapsus Linguæ.*"

The *Medical,* again, "wore a white greatcoat, and consequently talked loud"—(there is something very delicious in that *consequently*). He wore his hat on one side. He was active, volatile, and went to the top of Arthur's Seat on the Sunday forenoon. He was as quiet in a debating society as he was loud in the streets. He was reckless and imprudent: yesterday he insisted on your sharing a bottle of claret with him (and claret was claret then, before the cheap-and-nasty treaty), and to-morrow he asks you for the loan of a penny to buy the last number of the *Lapsus.*

The student of *Law,* again, was a learned man. "He had turned over the leaves of Justinian's *Institutes,* and knew that they were written in Latin. He was well acquainted with the title-page of Blackstone's *Commentaries,* and *argal* (as the grave-digger in *Hamlet* says) he was not a person to be laughed at." He attended the Parliament House in the character of a critic, and could give you stale sneers at all the celebrated speakers. He was the terror of essayists at the Speculative or the Forensic. In social qualities he seems to have stood unrivaled. Even in the police-office we find him shining with undiminished luster. "If a *Charlie* should find him rather noisy at an untimely hour, and venture to take him into custody, he appears next morning like a Daniel come to judgment. He opens his mouth to speak, and the divine precepts of unchanging justice and Scots law flow from his tongue. The magistrate listens in amazement, and fines him only a couple of guineas."

Such then were our predecessors and their College Magazine. Barclay, Ambrose, Young Amos, and Fergusson were to them what the Café, the Rainbow, and Rutherford's are to us. An hour's reading in these old pages absolutely confuses us, there is so much that is similar and so much that is different; the follies and amusements are so like our own, and the manner of frolicking and enjoying are so changed, that one pauses and looks about him in philosophic judgment. The muddy quadrangle is thick with living students; but in our eyes it swarms also with the phantasmal white greatcoats and tilted hats of 1824. Two races meet: races alike and diverse. Two performances are played before our eyes; but the change seems merely of impersonators, of scenery, of costume. Plot and passion are the same. It is the fall of the spun shilling whether seventy-one or twenty-four has the best of it.

In a future number we hope to give a glance at the individualities of the present, and see whether the cast shall be head or tail—whether we or the readers of the *Lapsus* stand higher in the balance.

THE MODERN STUDENT CONSIDERED GENERALLY

WE HAVE now reached the difficult portion of our task. *Mr. Tatler,* for all that we care, may have been as virulent as he liked about the students of a former day; but for the iron to touch our sacred selves, for a brother of the Guild to betray its most privy infirmities, let such a Judas look to himself as he passes on his way to the Scots Law or the Diagnostic, below the solitary lamp at the corner of the dark quadrangle. We confess that this idea alarms us. We enter a protest. We bind ourselves over verbally to keep the peace. We hope, moreover, that having thus made you secret to our misgivings, you will excuse us if we be dull, and set that down to caution which you might before have charged to the account of stupidity.

The natural tendency of civilization is to obliterate those distinctions which are the best salt of life. All the fine old professional flavor in language has evaporated. Your very grave-digger has forgotten his avocation in his electorship, and would quibble on the Franchise over Ophelia's grave, instead of more appropriately discussing the duration of bodies under ground. From this tendency, from this gradual attrition of life, in which everything pointed and characteristic is being rubbed down, till the whole world begins to slip between our fingers in smooth, undistinguishable sands, from this, we say, it follows that we must not attempt to join *Mr. Tatler* in his simple division of students into *Law, Divinity,* and *Medical.* Nowadays the Faculties may shake hands over their follies; and, like Mrs. Frail and Mrs. Foresight (in *Love for*

Love) they may stand in the doors of opposite class-rooms, crying: "Sister, Sister—Sister everyway!" A few restrictions, indeed, remain to influence the followers of individual branches of study. The *Divinity,* for example, must be an avowed believer; and as this, in the present day, is unhappily considered by many as a confession of weakness, he is fain to choose one of two ways of gilding the distasteful orthodox bolus. Some swallow it in a thin jelly of metaphysics; for it is even a credit to believe in God on the evidence of some crack-jaw philosopher, although it is a decided slur to believe in Him on His own authority. Others again (and this we think the worst method), finding German grammar a somewhat dry morsel, run their own little heresy as a proof of independence; and deny one of the cardinal doctrines that they may hold the others without being laughed at.

Besides, however, such influences as these, there is little more distinction between the faculties than the traditionary ideal, handed down through a long sequence of students, and getting rounder and more featureless at each successive session. The plague of uniformity has descended on the College. Students (and indeed all sorts and conditions of men) now require their faculty and character hung round their neck on a placard, like the scenes in Shakespeare's theater. And in the midst of all this weary sameness, not the least common feature is the gravity of every face. No more does the merry medical run eagerly in the clear winter morning up the rugged sides of Arthur's Seat, and hear the church-bells begin and thicken and die away below him among the gathered smoke of the city. He will not break Sunday to so little purpose. He no longer finds pleasure in the mere output of his surplus energy. He husbands his strength, and lays out walks, and reading, and amusement with deep consideration, so that he may get as much work and pleasure out of his body as he can, and waste none of his energy on mere impulse, or such flat enjoyment as an excursion in the country.

See the quadrangle in the interregnum of classes, in those two or three minutes when it is full of passing

students, and we think you will admit that, if we have not made it "an habitation of dragons," we have at least transformed it into "a court for owls." Solemnity broods heavily over the enclosure; and wherever you seek it, you will find a dearth of merriment, and absence of real youthful enjoyment. You might as well try

> "To move wild laughter in the throat of death,"

as to excite any healthy stir among the bulk of this staid company.

The studious congregate about the doors of the different classes, debating the matter of the lecture, or comparing note-books. A reserved rivalry sunders them. Here are some deep in Greek particles: there, others are already inhabitants of that land

> "Where entity and quiddity,
> Like ghosts of defunct bodies fly—
> Where Truth in person does appear
> Like words congealed in northern air."

But none of them seem to find any relish for their studies —no pedantic love of this subject or that lights up their eyes—science and learning are only means for a livelihood, which they have considerately embraced and which they solemnly pursue. "Labor's pale priests," their lips seem incapable of laughter, except in the way of polite recognition of professional wit. The stains of ink are chronic on their meager fingers. They walk like Saul among the asses.

The dandies are not less subdued. In 1824 there was a noisy dapper dandyism abroad. Vulgar, as we should now think, but yet genial—a matter of white greatcoats and loud voices—strangely different from the stately frippery that is rife at present. These men are out of their element in the quadrangle. Even the small remains of boisterous humor, which still clings to any collection of young men, jars painfully on their morbid sensibilities; and they beat a hasty retreat to resume their perfunctory march along Princes Street. Flirtation is to them a great social duty, a painful obligation, which they perform on every occasion

in the same chill official manner, and with the same commonplace advances, the same dogged observance of traditional behavior. The shape of their raiment is a burden almost greater than they can bear, and they halt in their walk to preserve the due adjustment of their trouser-knees, till one would fancy he had mixed in a procession of Jacobs. We speak, of course, for ourselves; but we would as soon associate with a herd of sprightly apes as with these gloomy modern beaus. Alas, that our Mirabels, our Valentines, even our Brummels, should have left their mantles upon nothing more amusing!

Nor are the fast men less constrained. Solemnity, even in dissipation, is the order of the day; and they go to the devil with a perverse seriousness, a systematic rationalism of wickedness that would have surprised the simpler sinners of old. Some of these men whom we see gravely conversing on the steps have but a slender acquaintance with each other. Their intercourse consists principally of mutual bulletins of depravity; and, week after week, as they meet they reckon up their items of transgression, and give an abstract of their downward progress for approval and encouragement. These folk form a freemasonry of their own. An oath is the shibboleth of their sinister fellowship. Once they hear a man swear, it is wonderful how their tongues loosen and their bashful spirits take enlargement, under the consciousness of brotherhood. There is no folly, no pardoning warmth of temper about them; they are as steady-going and systematic in their own way as the studious in theirs.

Not that we are without merry men. No. We shall not be ungrateful to those, whose grimaces, whose ironical laughter, whose active feet in the *College Anthem* have beguiled so many weary hours and added a pleasant variety to the strain of close attention. But even these are too evidently professional in their antics. They go about cogitating puns and inventing tricks. It is their vocation, Hal. They are the gratuitous jesters of the class-room; and, like the clown when he leaves the stage, their merriment too often sinks as the bell rings the hour of liberty, and they pass forth by the Post-Office, grave

and sedate, and meditating fresh gambols for the morrow. This is the impression left on the mind of any observing student by too many of his fellows. They seem all frigid old men; and one pauses to think how such an unnatural state of matters is produced. We feel inclined to blame for it the unfortunate absence of *University feeling* which is so marked a characteristic of our Edinburgh students. Academical interests are so few and far between—students, as students, have so little in common, except a peevish rivalry—there is such an entire want of broad college sympathies and ordinary college friendships, that we fancy that no University in the kingdom is in so poor a plight. Our system is full of anomalies. A, who cut B whilst he was a shabby student, curries sedulously up to him and cudgels his memory for anecdotes about him when he becomes the great so-and-so. Let there be an end of this shy, proud reserve on the one hand, and this shuddering fine-ladyism on the other; and we think we shall find both ourselves and the College bettered. Let it be a sufficient reason for intercourse that two men sit together on the same benches. Let the great A be held excused for nodding to the shabby B in Princes Street, if he can say, "That fellow is a student." Once this could be brought about, we think you would find the whole heart of the University beat faster. We think you would find a fusion among the students, a growth of common feelings, an increasing sympathy between class and class, whose influence (in such a heterogeneous company as ours) might be of incalculable value in all branches of politics and social progress. It would do more than this. If we could find some method of making the University a real mother to her sons—something beyond a building full of class-rooms, a Senatus and a lottery of somewhat shabby prizes—we should strike a death-blow at the constrained and unnatural attitude of our Society. At present we are not a united body, but a loose gathering of individuals, whose inherent attraction is allowed to condense them into little knots and coteries. Our last snowball riot read us a plain lesson on our condition. There was no party spirit—no unity of interests. A few, who were mischiev-

ously inclined, marched off to the College of Surgeons in a pretentious file; but even before they reached their destination the feeble inspiration had died out in many, and their numbers were sadly thinned. Some followed strange gods in the direction of Drummond Street, and others slunk back to meek good-boyism at the feet of the Professors. The same is visible in better things. As you send a man to an English University that he may have his prejudices rubbed off, you might send him to Edinburgh that he may have them ingrained—rendered indelible—fostered by sympathy into living principles of his spirit. And the reason of it is quite plain. From this absence of University feeling it comes that a man's friendships are always the direct and immediate results of these very prejudices. A common weakness is the best master of ceremonies in our quadrangle: a mutual vice is the readiest introduction. The studious associate with the studious alone—the dandies with the dandies.

There is nothing to force them to rub shoulders with the others; and so they grow day by day more wedded to their own original opinions and affections. They see through the same spectacles continually. All broad sentiments, all real catholic humanity expires; and the mind gets gradually stiffened into one position—becomes so habituated to a contracted atmosphere, that it shudders and withers under the least draft of the free air that circulates in the general field of mankind.

Specialism in Society then, is, we think, one cause of our present state. Specialism in study is another. We doubt whether this has ever been a good thing since the world began; but we are sure it is much worse now than it was. Formerly, when a man became a specialist, it was out of affection for his subject. With a somewhat grand devotion he left all the world of Science to follow his true love; and he contrived to find that strange pedantic interest which inspired the man who

> "Settled *Hoti's* business—let it be—
> Properly based *Oun*—
> Gave us the doctrine of the enclitic ***De,***
> Dead from the waist down."

Nowadays it is quite different. Our pedantry wants even the saving clause of Enthusiasm. The election is now matter of necessity and not of choice. Knowledge is now too broad a field for your Jack of all Trades; and, from beautifully utilitarian reasons, he makes his choice, draws his pen through a dozen branches of study, and behold—John the Specialist. That this is the way to be wealthy we shall not deny; but we hold that it is *not* the way to be healthy or wise. The whole mind becomes narrowed and circumscribed to one "punctual spot" of knowledge. A rank unhealthy soil breeds a harvest of prejudices. Feeling himself above others in his one little branch—in the classification of toadstools, or Carthaginian history—he waxes great in his own eyes and looks down on others. Having all his sympathies educated in one way, they die out in every other; and he is apt to remain a peevish, narrow, and intolerant bigot. Dilettante is now a term of reproach; but there is a certain form of dilettanteism to which no one can object. It is this that we want among our students. We wish them to abandon no subject until they have seen and felt its merit—to act under a general interest in all branches of knowledge, not a commercial eagerness to excel in one.

In both these directions our sympathies are constipated. We are apostles of our own caste and our own subject of study, instead of being, as we should, true men and *loving* students. Of course both of these could be corrected by the students themselves; but this is nothing to the purpose: it is more important to ask whether the Senatus or the body of alumni could do nothing toward the growth of better feeling and wider sentiments. Perhaps in another paper we may say something upon this head.

One other word, however, before we have done. What shall we be when we grow really old? Of yore, a man was thought to lay on restrictions and acquire new deadweight of mournful experience with every year, till he looked back on his youth as the very summer of impulse and freedom. We please ourselves with thinking that it can not be so with us. We would fain hope that, as we have begun in one way, we may end in another; and that

when we *are* in fact the octogenarians that we *seem* at present, there shall be no merrier men on earth. It is pleasant to picture us, sunning ourselves in Princes Street of a morning, or chirping over our evening cups, with all the merriment that we wanted in youth.

DEBATING SOCIETIES

A DEBATING society is at first somewhat of a disappointment. You do not often find the youthful Demosthenes chewing his pebbles in the same room with you; or, even if you do, you will probably think the performance little to be admired. As a general rule, the members speak shamefully ill. The subjects of debate are heavy; and so are the fines. The Ballot Question—oldest of dialectic nightmares—is often found astride of a somnolent sederunt. The Greeks and Romans, too, are reserved as sort of *general-utility* men, to do all the dirty work of illustration; and they fill as many functions as the famous waterfall scene at the *Princess's,* which I found doing duty on one evening as a gorge in Peru, a haunt of German robbers, and a peaceful vale in the Scottish borders. There is a sad absence of striking argument or real lively discussion. Indeed, you feel a growing contempt for your fellow members; and it is not until you rise yourself to hawk and hesitate and sit shamefully down again, amid eleemosynary applause, that you begin to find your level and value others rightly. Even then, even when failure has damped your critical ardor, you will see many things to be laughed at in the deportment of your rivals.

Most laughable, perhaps, are your indefatigable strivers after eloquence. They are of those who "pursue with eagerness the phantoms of hope," and who, since they expect that "the deficiencies of last sentence will be supplied by the next," have been recommended by Dr. Samuel Johnson to "attend to the History of Rasselas, Prince of Abyssinia." They are characterized by a hectic hopefulness. Nothing damps them. They rise from the ruins

Edinburgh University Magazine, March, 1871.

of one abortive sentence, to launch forth into another with unabated vigor. They have all the manner of an orator. From the tone of their voice, you would expect a splendid period—and lo! a string of broken-backed, disjointed clauses, eked out with stammerings and throat-clearings. They possess the art (learned from the pulpit) of rounding an uneuphonious sentence by dwelling on a single syllable—of striking a balance in a top-heavy period by lengthening out a word into a melancholy quaver. Withal, they never cease to hope. Even at last, even when they have exhausted all their ideas, even after the would-be peroration has finally refused to perorate, they remain upon their feet with their mouths open, waiting for some further inspiration, like Chaucer's widow's son in the dung-hole, after

"His throat was kit unto the nekké bone,"

in vain expectation of that seed that was to be laid upon his tongue, and give him renewed and clearer utterance.

These men may have something to say, if they could only say it—indeed they generally have; but the next class are people who, having nothing to say, are cursed with a facility and an unhappy command of words, that makes them the prime nuisances of the society they affect. They try to cover their absence of matter by an unwholesome vitality of delivery. They look triumphantly round the room, as if courting applause, after a torrent of diluted truism. They talk in a circle, harping on the same dull round of argument, and returning again and again to the same remark with the same sprightliness, the same irritating appearance of novelty.

After this set, any one is tolerable; so we shall merely hint at a few other varieties. There is your man who is preeminently conscientious, whose face beams with sincerity as he opens on the negative, and who votes on the affirmative at the end, looking round the room with an air of chastened pride. There is also the irrelevant speaker, who rises, emits a joke or two, and then sits down again, without ever attempting to tackle the subject of debate. Again, we have men who ride pick-a-back on

their family reputation, or, if their family have none, identify themselves with some well-known statesman, use his opinions, and lend him their patronage on all occasions. This is a dangerous plan, and serves oftener, I am afraid, to point a difference than to adorn a speech.

But alas! a striking failure may be reached without tempting Providence by any of these ambitious tricks. Our own stature will be found high enough for shame. The success of three simple sentences lures us into a fatal parenthesis in the fourth, from whose shut brackets we may never disentangle the thread of our discourse. A momentary flush tempts us into a quotation; and we may be left helpless in the middle of one of Pope's couplets, a white film gathering before our eyes, and our kind friends charitably trying to cover our disgrace by a feeble round of applause. *Amis lecteurs,* this is a painful topic. It is possible that we too, we, the "potent, grave, and reverend" editor, may have suffered these things, and drunk as deep as any of the cup of shameful failure. Let us dwell no longer on so delicate a subject.

In spite, however, of these disagreeables, I should recommend any student to suffer them with Spartan courage, as the benefits he receives should repay him an hundredfold for them all. The life of the debating society is a handy antidote to the life of the class-room and quadrangle. Nothing could be conceived more excellent as a weapon against many of those *peccant humors* that we have been railing against in the Jeremiad of our last *College Paper*—particularly in the field of intellect. It is a sad sight to see our heather-scented students, our boys of seventeen, coming up to College with determined views —*roués* in speculation—having gaged the vanity of philosophy or learned to shun it as the middleman of heresy—a company of determined, deliberate opinionists, not to be moved by all the sleights of logic. What have such men to do with study? If their minds are made up irrevocably, why burn the "studious lamp" in search of further confirmation? Every set opinion I hear a student deliver I feel a certain lowering of my regard. He who studies, he who is yet employed in groping for his premises, should

keep his mind fluent and sensitive, keen to mark flaws, and willing to surrender untenable positions. He should keep himself teachable, or cease the expensive farce of being taught. It is to further this docile spirit that we desire to press the claims of debating societies. It is as a means of melting down this museum of premature petrifactions into living and impressionable souls that we insist on their utility. If we could once prevail on our students to feel no shame in avowing an uncertain attitude toward any subject, if we could teach them that it was unnecessary for every lad to have his *opinionette* on every topic, we should have gone a far way toward bracing the intellectual tone of the coming race of thinkers; and this it is which debating societies are so well fitted to perform.

We there meet people of every shade of opinion, and make friends with them. We are taught to rail against a man the whole session through, and then hob-a-nob with him at the concluding entertainment. We find men of talent far exceeding our own, whose conclusions are widely different from ours; and we are thus taught to distrust ourselves. But the best means of all toward catholicity is that wholesome rule which some folk are most inclined to condemn,—I mean the law of *obliged speeches*. Your senior member commands; and you must take the affirmative or the negative, just as suits his best convenience. This tends to the most perfect liberality. It is no good hearing the arguments of an opponent, for in good verity you rarely follow them; and even if you do take the trouble to listen, it is merely in a captious search for weaknesses. This is proved, I fear, in every debate; when you hear each speaker arguing out his own prepared *spécialité* (he never intended speaking, of course, until some remarks of, etc.), arguing out, I say, his own *coached-up* subject without the least attention to what has gone before, as utterly at sea about the drift of his adversary's speech as Panurge when he argued with Thaumaste, and merely linking his own prelection to the last by a few flippant criticisms. Now, as the rule stands, you are saddled with the side you disapprove, and so you are forced, by regard for your own fame, to argue out,

to feel with, to elaborate completely, the case as it stands against yourself; and what a fund of wisdom do you not turn up in this idle digging of the vineyard! How many new difficulties take form before your eyes? how many superannuated arguments cripple finally into limbo, under the glance of your enforced eclecticism!

Nor is this the only merit of Debating Societies. They tend also to foster taste, and to promote friendship between University men. This last, as we have had occasion before to say, is the great requirement of our student life; and it will therefore be no waste of time if we devote a paragraph to this subject in its connection with Debating Societies. At present they partake too much of the nature of a *clique*. Friends propose friends, and mutual friends second them, until the society degenerates into a sort of family party. You may confirm old acquaintances, but you can rarely make new ones. You find yourself in the atmosphere of your own daily intercourse. Now, this is an unfortunate circumstance, which it seems to me might readily be rectified. Our Principal has shown himself so friendly toward all College improvements that I cherish the hope of seeing shortly realized a certain suggestion, which is not a new one with me, and which must often have been proposed and canvassed heretofore—I mean, a real *University Debating Society,* patronized by the Senatus, presided over by the Professors, to which every one might gain ready admittance on sight of his matriculation ticket, where it would be a favor and not a necessity to speak, and where the obscure student might have another object for attendance besides the mere desire to save his fines: to wit, the chance of drawing on himself the favorable consideration of his teachers. This would be merely following in the good tendency, which has been so noticeable during all this session, to increase and multiply student societies and clubs of every sort. Nor would it be a matter of much difficulty. The united societies would form a nucleus: one of the class-rooms at first, and perhaps afterward the great hall above the library, might be the place of meeting. There would be no want of attendance or enthusiasm, I am sure; for it is a very different

thing to speak under the bushel of a private club on the one hand, and, on the other, in a public place, where a happy period or a subtle argument may do the speaker permanent service in after life. Such a club might end, perhaps, by rivaling the "Union" at Cambridge or the "Union" at Oxford.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF UMBRELLAS[1]

IT IS wonderful to think what a turn has been given to our whole Society by the fact that we live under the sign of Aquarius,—that our climate is essentially wet. A mere arbitrary distinction, like the walking-swords of yore, might have remained the symbol of foresight and respectability, had not the raw mists and dropping showers of our island pointed the inclination of Society to another exponent of those virtues. A ribbon of the Legion of Honor or a string of medals may prove a person's courage; a title may prove his birth; a professorial chair his study and acquirement; but it is the habitual carriage of the umbrella that is the stamp of Respectability. The umbrella has become the acknowledged index of social position.

Robinson Crusoe presents us with a touching instance of the hankering after them inherent in the civilized and educated mind. To the superficial, the hot suns of Juan Fernandez may sufficiently account for his quaint choice of a luxury; but surely one who had borne the hard labor of a seaman under the tropics for all these years could have supported an excursion after goats or a peaceful *constitutional* arm in arm with the nude Friday. No, it was not this: the memory of a vanished respectability called for some outward manifestation, and the result was —an umbrella. A pious castaway might have rigged up a belfry and solaced his Sunday mornings with the mimicry of church-bells; but Crusoe was rather a moralist than a pietist, and his leaf-umbrella is as fine an example of the civilized mind striving to express itself under adverse circumstances as we have ever met with.

[1] This paper was written in collaboration with James Walter Ferrier.

Edinburgh University Magazine, February, 1871.

It is not for nothing, either, that the umbrella has become the very foremost badge of modern civilization—the Urim and Thummim of respectability. Its pregnant symbolism has taken its rise in the most natural manner. Consider, for a moment, when umbrellas were first introduced into this country, what manner of men would use them, and what class would adhere to the useless but ornamental cane. The first, without doubt, would be the hypochondriacal, out of solicitude for their health, or the frugal, out of care for their raiment; the second, it is equally plain, would include the fop, the fool, and the Bobadil. Any one acquainted with the growth of Society, and knowing out of what small seeds of cause are produced great revolutions, and wholly new conditions of intercourse, sees from this simple thought how the carriage of an umbrella came to indicate frugality, judicious regard for bodily welfare, and scorn for mere outward adornment, and, in one word, all those homely and solid virtues implied in the term RESPECTABILITY. Not that the umbrella's costliness has nothing to do with its great influence. Its possession, besides symbolizing (as we have already indicated) the change from wild Esau to plain Jacob dwelling in tents, implies a certain comfortable provision of fortune. It is not every one that can expose twenty-six shillings' worth of property to so many chances of loss and theft. So strongly do we feel on this point, indeed, that we are almost inclined to consider all who possess really well-conditioned umbrellas as worthy of the Franchise. They have a qualification standing in their lobbies; they carry a sufficient stake in the commonweal below their arm. One who bears with him an umbrella—such a complicated structure of whalebone, of silk, and of cane, that it becomes a very microcosm of modern industry—is necessarily a man of peace. A half-crown cane may be applied to an offender's head on a very moderate provocation; but a six-and-twenty shilling silk is a possession too precious to be adventured in the shock of war.

These are but a few glances at how umbrellas (in the general) came to their present high estate. But the true

Umbrella-Philosopher meets with far stranger applications as he goes about the streets.

Umbrellas, like faces, acquire a certain sympathy with the individual who carries them: indeed, they are far more capable of betraying his trust; for whereas a face is given to us so far ready made, and all our power over it is in frowning, and laughing, and grimacing, during the first three or four decades of life, each umbrella is selected from a whole shopful, as being most consonant to the purchaser's disposition. An undoubted power of diagnosis rests with the practised Umbrella-Philosopher. O you who lisp, and amble, and change the fashion of your countenances—you who conceal all these, how little do you think that you left a proof of your weakness in our umbrella-stand—that even now, as you shake out the folds to meet the thickening snow, we read in its ivory handle the outward and visible sign of your snobbery, or from the exposed gingham of its cover detect, through coat and waistcoat, the hidden hypocrisy of the *"dickey"!* But alas! even the umbrella is no certain criterion. The falsity and the folly of the human race have degraded that graceful symbol to the ends of dishonesty; and while some umbrellas, from carelessness in selection, are not strikingly characteristic (for it is only in what a man loves that he displays his real nature), others, from certain prudential motives, are chosen directly opposite to the person's disposition. A mendacious umbrella is a sign of great moral degradation. Hypocrisy naturally shelters itself below a silk; while the fast youth goes to visit his religious friends armed with the decent and reputable gingham. May it not be said of the bearers of these inappropriate umbrellas that they go about the streets "with a lie in their right hand"?

The kings of Siam, as we read, besides having a graduated social scale of umbrellas (which was a good thing), prevented the great bulk of their subjects from having any at all, which was certainly a bad thing. We should be sorry to believe that this Eastern legislator was a fool —the idea of an aristocracy of umbrellas is too philosophic to have originated in a nobody,—and we have accordingly

taken exceeding pains to find out the reason of this harsh restriction. We think we have succeeded; but, while admiring the principle at which he aimed, and while cordially recognizing in the Siamese potentate the only man before ourselves who had taken a real grasp of the umbrella, we must be allowed to point out how unphilosophically the great man acted in this particular. His object, plainly, was to prevent any unworthy persons from bearing the sacred symbol of domestic virtues. We can not excuse his limiting these virtues to the circle of his court. We must only remember that such was the feeling of the age in which he lived. Liberalism had not yet raised the war-cry of the working classes. But here was his mistake: it was a needless regulation. Except in a very few cases of hypocrisy joined to a powerful intellect, men, not by nature *umbrellarians,* have tried again and again to become so by art, and yet have failed—have expended their patrimony in the purchase of umbrella after umbrella, and yet have systematically lost them, and have finally, with contrite spirits and shrunken purses, given up their vain struggle, and relied on theft and borrowing for the remainder of their lives. This is the most remarkable fact that we have had occasion to notice; and yet we challenge the candid reader to call it in question. Now, as there can not be any *moral selection* in a mere dead piece of furniture—as the umbrella can not be supposed to have an affinity for individual men equal and reciprocal to that which men certainly feel toward individual umbrellas,—we took the trouble of consulting a scientific friend as to whether there was any possible physical explanation of the phenomenon. He was unable to supply a plausible theory, or even hypothesis; but we extract from his letter the following interesting passage relative to the physical peculiarities of umbrellas: "Not the least important, and by far the most curious property of the umbrella, is the energy which it displays in affecting the atmospheric strata. There is no fact in meteorology better established —indeed, it is almost the only one on which meteorologists are agreed—than that the carriage of an umbrella produces desiccation of the air; while if it be left at home,

aqueous vapor is largely produced, and is soon deposited in the form of rain. No theory," my friend continues, "competent to explain this hygrometric law has yet been given (as far as I am aware) by Herschel, Dove, Glaisher, Tait, Buchan, or any other writer; nor do I pretend to supply the defect. I venture, however, to throw out the conjecture that it will be ultimately found to belong to the same class of natural laws as that agreeable to which a slice of toast always descends with the buttered surface downward."

But it is time to draw to a close. We could expatiate much longer upon this topic, but want of space constrains us to leave unfinished these few desultory remarks—slender contributions toward a subject which has fallen sadly backward, and which, we grieve to say, was better understood by the king of Siam in 1686 than by all the philosophers of to-day. If, however, we have awakened in any rational mind an interest in the symbolism of umbrellas—in any generous heart a more complete sympathy with the dumb companion of respectability strong enough to make him expend his six-and-twenty shillings—we shall have deserved well of the world, to say nothing of the many industrious persons employed in the manufacture of the article.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF NOMENCLATURE

"How many Cæsars and Pompeys, by mere inspirations of the names, have been rendered worthy of them? And how many are there, who might have done exceeding well in the world, had not their characters and spirits been totally depressed and Nicodemus'd into nothing?"—*Tristram Shandy,* vol. i. chap. xix.

SUCH were the views of the late Walter Shandy, Esq., Turkey merchant. To the best of my belief, Mr. Shandy is the first who fairly pointed out the incalculable influence of nomenclature upon the whole life —who seems first to have recognized the one child, happy in a heroic appellation, soaring upward on the wings of fortune, and the other, like the dead sailor in his shotted hammock, haled down by sheer weight of name into the abysses of social failure. Solomon possibly had his eye on some such theory when he said that "a good name is better than precious ointment"; and perhaps we may trace a similar spirit in the compilers of the English Catechism, and the affectionate interest with which they linger round the catechumen's name at the very threshold of their work. But, be these as they may, I think no one can censure me for appending, in pursuance of the expressed wish of his son, the Turkey merchant's name to his system, and pronouncing, without further preface, a short epitome of the *Shandean Philosophy of Nomenclature.*

To begin, then: the influence of our name makes itself felt from the very cradle. As a schoolboy I remember the pride with which I hailed Robin Hood, Robert Bruce, and Robert le Diable as my name-fellows; and the feeling of sore disappointment that fell on my heart when I found a freebooter or a general who did not share with me a single

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one of my numerous *prænomina*. Look at the delight with which two children find they have the same name. They are friends from that moment forth; they have a bond of union stronger than exchange of nuts and sweetmeats. This feeling, I own, wears off in later life. Our names lose their freshness and interest, become trite and indifferent. But this, dear reader, is merely one of the sad effects of those "shades of the prison-house" which come gradually betwixt us and nature with advancing years; it affords no weapon against the philosophy of names.

In after-life, although we fail to trace its working, that name which careless godfathers lightly applied to your unconscious infancy will have been molding your character, and influencing with irresistible power the whole course of your earthly fortunes. But the last name, overlooked by Mr. Shandy, is no whit less important as a condition of success. Family names, we must recollect, are but inherited nicknames; and if the *sobriquet* were applicable to the ancestor, it is most likely applicable to the descendant also. You would not expect to find Mr. M'Phun acting as a mute, or Mr. M'Lumpha excelling as a professor of dancing. Therefore, in what follows, we shall consider names, independent of whether they are first or last. And to begin with, look what a pull *Cromwell* had over *Pym*—the one name full of a resonant imperialism, the other, mean, pettifogging, and unheroic to a degree. Who would expect eloquence from *Pym* — who would read poems by *Pym*—who would bow to the opinion of *Pym?* He might have been a dentist, but he should never have aspired to be a statesman. I can only wonder that he succeeded as he did. Pym and Habakkuk stand first upon the roll of men who have triumphed, by sheer force of genius, over the most unfavorable appellations. But even these have suffered; and, had they been more fitly named, the one might have been Lord Protector, and the other have shared the laurels with Isaiah. In this matter we must not forget that all our great poets have borne great names. Chaucer, Spenser, Shakespeare, Milton, Pope, Wordsworth, Shelley—what a constellation of lordly

words! Not a single commonplace name among them—not a Brown, not a Jones, not a Robinson; they are all names that one would stop and look at on a door-plate. Now, imagine if *Pepys* had tried to clamber somehow into the enclosure of poetry, what a blot would that word have made upon the list! The thing was impossible. In the first place, a certain natural consciousness that men have would have held him down to the level of his name, would have prevented him from rising above the Pepsine standard, and so haply withheld him altogether from attempting verse. Next, the booksellers would refuse to publish, and the world to read them, on the mere evidence of the fatal appellation. And now, before I close this section, I must say one word as to *punnable* names, names that stand alone, that have a significance and life apart from him that bears them. These are the bitterest of all. One friend of mind goes bowed and humbled through life under the weight of this misfortune; for it is an awful thing when a man's name is a joke, when he can not be mentioned without exciting merriment, and when even the intimation of his death bids fair to carry laughter into many a home.

So much for people who are badly named. Now for people who are *too* well named, who go top-heavy from the font, who are baptized into a false position, and find themselves beginning life eclipsed under the fame of some of the great ones of the past. A man, for instance, called William Shakespeare could never dare to write plays. He is thrown into too humbling an apposition with the author of *Hamlet*. His own name coming after is such an anticlimax. "The plays of William Shakespeare"? says the reader—"Oh no! The plays of William Shakespeare Cockerill," and he throws the book aside. In wise pursuance of such views, Mr. John Milton Hengler, who not long since delighted us in this favored town, has never attempted to write an epic, but has chosen a new path, and has excelled upon the tight-rope. A marked example of triumph over this is the case of Mr. Dante Gabriel Rossetti. On the face of the matter, I should have advised him to imitate the pleasing modesty of the last-named

gentleman, and confine his ambition to the sawdust. But Mr. Rossetti has triumphed. He has even dared to translate from his mighty name-father; and the voice of fame supports him in his boldness.

Dear readers, one might write a year upon this matter. A lifetime of comparison and research could scarce suffice for its elucidation. So here, if it please you, we shall let it rest. Slight as these notes have been, I would that the great founder of the system had been alive to see them. How he had warmed and brightened, how his persuasive eloquence would have fallen on the ears of Toby; and what a letter of praise and sympathy would not the editor have received before the month was out! Alas, the thing was not to be. Walter Shandy died and was duly buried, while yet his theory lay forgotten and neglected by his fellow countrymen. But, reader, the day will come, I hope, when a paternal government will stamp out, as seeds of national weakness, all depressing patronymics, and when godfathers and godmothers will soberly and earnestly debate the interest of the nameless one, and not rush blindfold to the christening. In these days there shall be written a Godfather's Assistant, in shape of a dictionary of names, with their concomitant virtues and vices; and this book shall be scattered broadcast through the land, and shall be on the table of every one eligible for godfathership, until such a thing as a vicious or untoward appellation shall have ceased from off the face of the earth.

THE STIMULATION OF THE ALPS

TO ANY ONE who should come from a southern sanitarium to the Alps, the row of sunburned faces round the table would present the first surprise. He would begin by looking for the invalids, and he would lose his pains, for not one out of five of even the bad cases bears the mark of sickness on his face. The plump sunshine from above and its strong reverberation from below color the skin like an Indian climate; the treatment, which consists mainly of the open air, exposes even the sickliest to tan, and a tableful of invalids comes, in a month or two, to resemble a tableful of hunters. But although he may be thus surprised at the first glance, his astonishment will grow greater as he experiences the effects of the climate on himself. In many ways it is a trying business to reside upon the Alps: the stomach is exercised, the appetite often languishes, the liver may at times rebel; and, because you have come so far from metropolitan advantages, it does not follow that you shall recover. But one thing is undeniable—that is that in the rare air, clear cold, and blinding light of Alpine winters, a man takes a certain troubled delight in his existence which can nowhere else be paralleled. He is perhaps no happier, but he is stingingly alive. It does not, perhaps, come out of him in work or exercise, yet he feels an enthusiasm of the blood unknown in more temperate climates. It may not be health, but it is fun.

There is nothing more difficult to communicate on paper than this baseless ardor, this stimulation of the brain, this sterile joyousness of spirits. You wake every morning, see the gold upon the snow peaks, become filled with courage, and bless God for your prolonged existence. The

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valleys are but a stride to you; you cast your shoe over the hilltops; your ears and your heart sing; in the words of an unverified quotation from the Scotch psalms, you feel yourself fit "on the wings of all the winds" to "come flying all abroad." Europe and your mind are too narrow for that flood of energy. Yet it is notable that you are hard to root out of your bed; that you start forth singing, indeed, on your walk, yet are unusually ready to turn home again; that the best of you is volatile; and that although the restlessness remains till night, the strength is early at an end. With all these heady jollities, you are half conscious of an underlying languor in the body; you prove not to be so well as you had fancied; you weary before you have well begun; and though you mount at morning with the lark, that is not precisely a song-bird's heart that you bring back with you when you return with aching limbs and peevish temper to your inn.

It is hard to say wherein it lies, but this joy of Alpine winters is its own reward. Baseless, in a sense, it is more than worth more permanent improvements. The dream of health is perfect while it lasts; and if, in trying to realize it, you speedily wear out the dear hallucination, still every day, and many times a day, you are conscious of a strength you scarce possess, and a delight in living as merry as it proves to be transient. The brightness—heaven and earth conspiring to be bright—the levity and quiet of the air; the odd, stirring silence—more stirring than a tumult; the snow, the frost, the enchanted landscape: all have their part in the effect and on the memory, "tous vous tapent sur la tête;" and yet when you have enumerated all, you have gone no nearer to explain or even to qualify the delicate exhilaration that you feel—delicate, you may say, and yet excessive, greater than can be said in prose, almost greater than an invalid can bear. There is a certain wine of France, known in England in some gaseous disguise, but when drunk in the land of its nativity still as a pool, clean as river water, and as heady as verse. It is more than probable that in its noble natural condition this was the very wine of Anjou so beloved by Athos in the "Musketeers." Now, if the reader has ever

washed down a liberal second breakfast with the wine in question, and gone forth, on the back of these dilutions, into a sultry, sparkling noontide, he will have felt an influence almost as genial, although strangely grosser, than this fairy titillation of the nerves among the snow and sunshine of the Alps. That also is a mode, we need not say of intoxication, but of sobriety. Thus also a man walks in a strong sunshine of the mind, and follows smiling, insubstantial meditations. And, whether he be really so clever or so strong as he supposes, in either case he will enjoy his chimera while it lasts.

The influence of this giddy air displays itself in many secondary ways. A certain sort of labored pleasantry has already been recognized, and many perhaps have been remarked in these papers, as a sort peculiar to that climate. People utter their judgments with a cannonade of syllables, a big word is as good as a meal to them; and the turn of a phrase goes further than humor or wisdom. By the professional writer many sad vicissitudes have to be undergone. At first, he can not write at all. The heart, it appears, is unequal to the pressure of business, and the brain, left without nourishment, goes into a mild decline. Next, some power of work returns to him, accompanied by jumping headaches. Last, the spring is opened, and there pours at once from his pen a world of blatant, hustling polysyllables, and talk so high as, in the old joke, to be positively offensive in hot weather. He writes it in good faith and with a sense of inspiration; it is only when he comes to read what he has written that surprise and disquiet seize upon his mind. What is he to do, poor man? All his little fishes talk like whales. This yeasty inflation, this stiff and strutting architecture of the sentence, has come upon him while he slept; and it is not he, it is the Alps that are to blame. He is not, perhaps, alone, which somewhat comforts him. Nor is the ill without a remedy. Some day, when the Spring returns, he shall go down a little lower in this world, and remember quieter inflections and more modest language. But here, in the mean time, there seems to swim up some outline of a new cerebral hygiene and a good time coming, when experi-

enced advisers shall send a man to the proper measured level for the ode, the biography, the religious tract; and a nook may be found, between the sea and Chimborazo, where Mr. Swinburne shall be able to write more continently, and Mr. Browning somewhat slower.

Is it a return of youth, or is it a congestion of the brain? It is a sort of congestion, perhaps, that leads the invalid, when all goes well, to face the new day with such a bubbling cheerfulness. It is certainly congestion that makes night hideous with visions, all the chambers of a many-storied caravansary haunted with vociferous nightmares, and many wakeful people come down late for breakfast in the morning. Upon that theory the cynic may explain the whole affair—exhilaration, nightmares, pomp of tongue and all. But, on the other hand, the peculiar blessedness of boyhood may itself be but a symptom of the same complaint, for the two effects are strangely similar; and the frame of mind of the invalid upon the Alps is a sort of intermittent youth, with periods of lassitude. The fountain of Juventus does not play steadily in these parts; but there it plays, and possibly nowhere else.

FONTAINEBLEAU

VILLAGE COMMUNITIES OF PAINTERS

I

THE forest of Fontainebleau is the great *al fresco* school of art of modern France. It has the prestige of the great names, Rousseau and Millet; through the palace, its artistic history mounts as high as the days of the Renaissance; and the singular charm which it exerts upon the minds of men still leads the casual visitor to return.

The charm of Fontainebleau is a thing apart. It is a place that people love even more than they admire. The vigorous forest air, the silence, the majestic avenues of highway, the wilderness of tumbled boulders, the great age and dignity of certain groves—these are but ingredients, they are not the secret of the philter. The place is sanative; the air, the light, the perfumes, and the shapes of things concord in happy harmony. The artist may be idle and not fear the "blues." He may dally with his life. Mirth, lyric mirth, and a vivacious classical contentment are of the very essence of the better kind of art; and these, in that most smiling forest, he has the chance to learn or to remember. Even on the plain of Bière, where the Angelus of Millet still tolls upon the ear of fancy, a larger air, a higher heaven, something ancient and healthy in the face of nature, purify the mind alike from dulness and hysteria. There is no place where the young are more gladly conscious of their youth, or the old better contented with their age.

The fact of its great and special beauty further recommends this country to the artist. The field was chosen by men in whose blood there still raced some of the gleeful or

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solemn exultation of great art—Millet who loved dignity like Michelangelo, Rousseau whose modern brush was dipped in the glamour of the ancients. It was chosen before the day of that strange turn in the history of art, of which we now perceive the culmination in impressionistic tales and pictures—that voluntary aversion of the eye from all speciously strong and beautiful effects—that disinterested love of dulness which has set so many Peter Bells to paint the riverside primrose. It was then chosen for its proximity to Paris. And for the same cause, and by the force of tradition, the painter of to-day continues to inhabit and to paint it. There is in France scenery incomparable for romance and harmony. Provence, and the valley of the Rhone from Vienne to Tarascon, are one succession of masterpieces waiting for the brush. The beauty is not merely beauty; it tells, besides, a tale to the imagination, and surprises while it charms. Here you shall see castellated towns that would befit the scenery of dreamland: streets that glow with color like cathedral windows; hills of the most exquisite proportions; flowers of every precious color, growing thick like grass. All these, by the grace of railway travel, are brought to the very door of the modern painter; yet he does not seek them; he remains faithful to Fontainebleau, to the eternal bridge of Grez, to the watering-pot cascade in Cernay valley. And perhaps, as a story of romantic incident stands forth more boldly in the achromatic outlines of Dumas or Scott than overlaid with the peering preciosity of Gautier, these large and distant landscapes are unsuited to the painting of to-day; perhaps the art of our contemporary painters is indeed more at home among the gentler attractions of the north. Even Fontainebleau was chosen for him; even in Fontainebleau, he shrinks from what is sharply characteredd. But one thing, at least, is certain, whatever he may choose to paint and in whatever manner, it is good for the artist to dwell among graceful shapes. Fontainebleau, if it be but quiet scenery, is classically graceful; and though the student may look for different qualities, this quality, silently present, will educate his hand and eye.

But, before all its other advantages—charm, loveliness,

or proximity to Paris—comes the great fact that it is already colonized. The institution of a painter's colony is a work of time and tact. The population must be conquered. The innkeeper has to be taught, and he soon learns, the lesson of unlimited credit; he must be taught to welcome as a favored guest a young gentleman in a very greasy coat, and with little baggage beyond a box of colors and a canvas; and he must learn to preserve his faith in customers who will eat heartily and drink of the best, borrow money to buy tobacco, and perhaps not pay a stiver for a year. A color merchant has next to be attracted. A certain vogue must be given to the place, lest the painter, most gregarious of animals, should find himself alone. And no sooner are these first difficulties overcome, than fresh perils spring up upon the other side; and the bourgeois and the tourist are knocking at the gate. This is the crucial moment for the colony. If these intruders gain a footing, they not only banish freedom and amenity; pretty soon, by means of their long purses, they will have undone the education of the innkeeper; prices will rise and credit shorten; and the poor painter must fare farther on and find another hamlet. "Not here, O Apollo!" will become his song. Thus Trouville and, the other day, St. Raphael were lost to the arts. Curious and not always edifying are the shifts that the French student uses to defend his lair; like the cuttlefish, he must sometimes blacken the waters of his chosen pool; but at such a time and for so practical a purpose Mrs. Grundy must allow him license. Where his own purse and credit are not threatened, he will do the honors of his village generously. Any artist is made welcome, through whatever medium he may seek expression; science is respected; even the idler, if he prove, as he so rarely does, a gentleman, will soon begin to find himself at home. And when that essentially modern creature, the English or American girl student, began to walk calmly into his favorite inns as if into a drawing-room at home, the French painter owned himself defenseless; he submitted or he fled. His French respectability, quite as precise as ours, though covering different provinces of life, recoiled aghast before the inno-

vation. But the girls were painters; there was nothing to be done; and Barbizon, when I last saw it and for the time at least, was practically ceded to the fair invader. Paterfamilias, on the other hand, the common tourist, the holiday shopman, and the cheap young gentleman upon the spree, he hounded from his villages with every circumstance of contumely.

This purely artistic society is excellent for the young artist. The lads are mostly fools; they hold the latest orthodoxy in its crudeness; they are at that stage of education, for the most part, when a man is too much occupied with style to be aware of the necessity for any matter; and this, above all for the Englishman, is excellent. To work grossly at the trade, to forget sentiment, to think of his material and nothing else, is, for a while at least, the king's highway of progress. Here, in England, too many painters and writers dwell dispersed, unshielded, among the intelligent bourgeois. These, when they are not merely indifferent, prate to him about the lofty aims and moral influence of art. And this is the lad's ruin. For art is, first of all and last of all, a trade. The love of words and not a desire to publish new discoveries, the love of form and not a novel reading of historical events, mark the vocation of the writer and the painter. The arabesque, properly speaking, and even in literature, is the first fancy of the artist; he first plays with his material as a child with a kaleidoscope; and he is already in a second stage when he begins to use his pretty counters for the end of representation. In that, he must pause long and toil faithfully; that is his apprenticeship; and it is only the few who will really grow beyond it, and go forward, fully equipped, to do the business of real art—to give life to abstractions and significance and charm to facts. In the mean while, let him dwell much among his fellow craftsmen. They alone can take a serious interest in the childish tasks and pitiful successes of these years. They alone can behold with equanimity this fingering of the dumb keyboard, this polishing of empty sentences, this dull and literal painting of dull and insignificant subjects. Outsiders will spur him on. They will say, "Why do you not

write a great book? paint a great picture?" If his guardian angel fail him, they may even persuade him to the attempt, and, ten to one, his hand is coarsened and his style falsified for life.

And this brings me to a warning. The life of the apprentice to any art is both unstrained and pleasing; it is strewn with small successes in the midst of a career of failure, patiently supported; the heaviest scholar is conscious of a certain progress; and if he come not appreciably nearer to the art of Shakespeare, grows letter-perfect in the domain of A-B, ab. But the time comes when a man should cease prelusory gymnastic, stand up, put a violence upon his will, and for better or worse, begin the business of creation. This evil day, there is a tendency continually to postpone: above all with painters. They have made so many studies that it has become a habit; they make more, the walls of exhibitions blush with them; and death finds these aged students still busy with their hornbook. This class of man finds a congenial home in artist villages; in the slang of the English colony at Barbizon we used to call them "Snoozers." Continual returns to the city, the society of men further advanced, the study of great works, a sense of humor or, if such a thing is to be had, a little religion or philosophy are the means of treatment. It will be time enough to think of curing the malady after it has been caught; for to catch it is the very thing for which you seek that dreamland of the painters' village. "Snoozing" is a part of the artistic education; and the rudiments must be learned stupidly, all else being forgotten, as if they were an object in themselves.

Lastly, there is something, or there seems to be something, in the very air of France that communicates the love of style. Precision, clarity, the cleanly and crafty employment of material, a grace in the handling, apart from any value in the thought, seem to be acquired by the mere residence; or if not acquired, become at least the more appreciated. The air of Paris is alive with this technical inspiration. And to leave that city and awake next day upon the borders of the forest is but to change externals. The same spirit of dexterity and finish breathes

from the long alleys and the lofty groves, from the wildernesses that are still pretty in their confusion, and the great plain that contrives to be decorative in its emptiness.

II

In spite of its really considerable extent, the forest of Fontainebleau is hardly anywhere tedious. I know the whole western side of it with what, I suppose, I may call thoroughness; well enough at least to testify that there is no square mile without some special character and charm. Such quarters, for instance, as the Long Rocher, the Bas-Bréau, and the Reine Blanche, might be a hundred miles apart; they have scarce a point in common beyond the silence of the birds. The two last are really conterminous; and in both are tall and ancient trees that have outlived a thousand political vicissitudes. But in the one the great oaks prosper placidly upon an even floor; they beshadow a great field; and the air and the light are very free below their stretching boughs. In the other the trees find difficult footing; castles of white rock lie tumbled one upon another, the foot slips, the crooked viper slumbers, the moss clings in the crevice; and above it all the great beech goes spiring and casting forth her arms, and with a grace beyond church architecture, canopies this rugged chaos. Meanwhile, dividing the two cantons, the broad white causeway of the Paris road runs in an avenue; a road conceived for pageantry and for triumphal marches, an avenue for an army; but its days of glory over, it now lies grilling in the sun between cool groves, and only at intervals the vehicle of the cruising tourist is seen far away and faintly audible during its ample sweep. A little upon one side, and you find a district of sand and birch and boulder; a little upon the other lies the valley of Apremont, all juniper and heather; and close beyond that you may walk into a zone of pine-trees. So artfully are the ingredients mingled. Nor must it be forgotten that, in all this part, you come continually forth upon a hilltop, and behold the plain, northward and westward, like an

unrefulgent sea; nor that all day long the shadows keep changing; and at last, to the red fires of sunset, night succeeds, and with the night a new forest, full of whisper, gloom, and fragrance. There are few things more renovating than to leave Paris, the lamplit arches of the Carrousel, and the long alinement of the glittering streets, and to bathe the senses in this fragrant darkness of the wood.

In this continual variety the mind is kept vividly alive. It is a changeful place to paint, a stirring place to live in. As fast as your foot carries you, you pass from scene to scene, each endeared with sylvan charm, each vigorously painted in the colors of the sun. The air, which is cooled all day in crypts of underwood, the incense of the resin, the listening silence of the groves, the unbroken solitude, the sunlit distance, the scurrying of woodland animals, the shadowy flitting of deer, and that hereditary spell of forests on the mind of man who still remembers and salutes the ancient refuge of his race—legend and sight, sound and silence, alike gratify and stimulate the heart.

And yet the forest has been civilized throughout. The most savage corners bear a name, and have been cherished like antiquities; in the most remote, nature has prepared and balanced her effects as if with conscious art; and man, with his guiding arrows of blue paint, has countersigned the picture. After your farthest wandering, you are never surprised to come forth upon the vast avenue of highway, to strike the center point of branching alleys, or to find the aqueduct trailing, thousand-footed, through the brush. It is not a wilderness; it is rather a preserve. And, fitly enough, the center of the maze is not a hermit's cavern. In the midst, a little mirthful town lies sunlit, humming with the business of pleasure; and the place, breathing distinction and peopled by historic names, stands smokeless among gardens.

Perhaps the last attempt at savage life was that of the harmless humbug who called himself the hermit. In a great tree, close by the highroad, he had built himself a little cabin after the manner of the Swiss Family Robinson; thither he mounted at night, by the romantic aid of

a rope ladder; and if dirt be any profit of sincerity, the man was as savage as a Sioux. I had the pleasure of his acquaintance; he appeared grossly stupid, not in his perfect wits, and interested in nothing but small change; for that he had a great avidity. In the course of time, he proved to be a chicken stealer, and vanished from his perch; and perhaps from the first he was no true votary of forest freedom, but an ingenious, theatrically minded beggar, and his cabin in the tree was only stock in trade to beg withal. The choice of his position would seem to indicate so much; for if in the forest there are no places still to be discovered, there are many that have been forgotten, and that lie unvisited. There, to be sure, are the blue arrows waiting to reconduct you, now blazed upon a tree, now posted in the corner of a rock. But your security from interruption is complete; you might camp for weeks, if there were only water, and not a soul suspect your presence; and if I may suppose the reader to have committed some great crime and come to me for aid, I think I could still find my way to a small cavern, fitted with a hearth and chimney, where he might lie perfectly concealed. A confederate landscape-painter might daily supply him with food; for water, he would have to make a nightly tramp as far as to the nearest pond; and at last, when the hue and cry began to blow over, he might get gently on the train at some side station, work round by a series of junctions, and be quietly captured at the frontier.

Thus Fontainebleau, although it is truly but a pleasure-ground, and although, in favorable weather, and in the more celebrated quarters, it literally buzzes with the tourist, yet has some of the immunities and offers some of the repose of natural forest. And the solitary, although he must return at night to his frequented inn, may yet pass the day with his own thoughts in the companionable silence of the trees. The demands of the imagination vary; some can be alone in a back garden looked upon by windows; others, like the ostrich, are content with a solitude that meets the eye; and others, again, expand in fancy to the very borders of their desert, and are irritably conscious

of a hunter's camp in an adjacent county. To these last, of course, Fontainebleau will seem but an extended tea-garden: a Rosherville on a by-day. But to the plain man it offers solitude: an excellent thing in itself, and a good whet for company.

III

I was for some time a consistent Barbizonian: *et ego in Arcadia vixi,* it was a pleasant season; and that noiseless hamlet lying close among the borders of the wood is for me, as for so many others, a green spot in memory. The great Millet was just dead, the green shutters of his modest house were closed; his daughters were in mourning. The date of my first visit was thus an epoch in the history of art: in a lesser way, it was an epoch in the history of the Latin Quarter. The "Petit Cénacle" was dead and buried; Murger and his crew of sponging vagabonds were all at rest from their expedients: the tradition of their real life was nearly lost; and the prettified legend of the "Vie de Bohème" had become a sort of gospel, and still gave the cue to zealous imitators. But if the book be written in rose-water, the imitation was still further expurgated: honesty was the rule: the innkeepers gave, as I have said, almost unlimited credit: they suffered the seediest painter to depart, to take all his belongings, and to leave his bill unpaid; and if they sometimes lost it was by English and Americans alone. At the same time, the great influx of Anglo-Saxons had begun to affect the life of the studios. There had been disputes; and in one instance, at least, the English and the Americans had made common cause to prevent a cruel pleasantry. It would be well if nations and races could communicate their qualities; but in practise, when they look upon each other, they have an eye to nothing but defects. The Anglo-Saxon is essentially dishonest; the French is devoid by nature of the principle that we call "Fair Play." The Frenchman marveled at the scruples of his guest, and, when that defender of innocence retired oversea and left his bills unpaid, he marveled once again; the good and evil

were, in his eyes, part and parcel of the same eccentricity; a shrug expressed his judgment upon both.

At Barbizon there was no master, no pontiff in the arts. Palizzi bore rule at Grez—urbane, superior rule—his memory rich in anecdotes of the great men of yore, his mind fertile in theories; skeptical, composed and venerable to the eye; and yet beneath these outworks, all twittering with Italian superstition, his eye scouting for omens, and the whole fabric of his manners giving way on the appearance of a hunchback. Cernay has Pelouse, the admirable, placid Pelouse, smilingly critical of youth, who, when a full-blown commercial traveler, suddenly threw down his samples, bought a color-box, and became the master whom we have all admired. Marlotte, for a central figure, boasts Oliver de Penne. Only Barbizon, since the death of Millet, is a headless commonwealth. Even its secondary lights, and those who in my day made the stranger welcome, have since deserted it. The good Lachèvre has departed, carrying his household gods; and long before that Gaston Lafenestre was taken from our midst by an untimely death. He died before he had deserved success; it may be, he would never have deserved it; but his kind, comely, modest countenance still haunts the memory of all who knew him. Another—whom I will not name—has moved further on, pursuing the strange Odyssey of his decadence. His days of royal favor had departed even then; but he still retained, in his narrower life at Barbizon, a certain stamp of conscious importance, hearty, friendly, filling the room, the occupant of several chairs; nor had he yet ceased his losing battle, still laboring upon great canvases that none would buy, still waiting the return of fortune. But these days also were too good to last; and the former favorite of two sovereigns fled, if I heard the truth, by night. There was a time when he was counted a great man, and Millet but a dauber; behold, how the whirligig of time brings in his revenges! To pity Millet is a piece of arrogance; if life be hard for such resolute and pious spirits, it is harder still for us, had we the wit to understand it; but we may pity his unhappier rival, who for no apparent merit, was raised to opulence and mo-

mentary fame, and, through no apparent fault, was suffered step by step to sink again to nothing. No misfortune can exceed the bitterness of such back-foremost progress, even bravely supported as it was; but to those also who were taken early from the easel, a regret is due. From all the young men of this period, one stood out by the vigor of his promise; he was in the age of fermentation, enamored of eccentricities. "Il faut faire de la peinture nouvelle," was his watchword; but if time and experience had continued his education, if he had been granted health to return from these excursions to the steady and the central, I must believe that the name of Hills had become famous.

Siron's inn, that excellent artists' barrack, was managed upon easy principles. At any hour of the night, when you returned from wandering in the forest, you went to the billiard-room and helped yourself to liquors, or descended to the cellar and returned laden with beer or wine. The Sirons were all locked in slumber; there was none to check your inroads; only at the week's end a computation was made, the gross sum was divided, and a varying share set down to every lodger's name under the rubric: estrats. Upon the more long-suffering the larger tax was levied; and your bill lengthened in a direct proportion to the easiness of your disposition. At any hour of the morning, again, you could get your coffee or cold milk and set forth into the forest. The doves had perhaps wakened you, fluttering into your very chamber; and on the threshold of the inn you were met by the aroma of the forest. Close by were the great aisles, the mossy boulders, the interminable field of forest shadow. There you were free to dream and wander. And at noon, and again at six o'clock, a good meal awaited you on Siron's table. The whole of your accommodation, set aside that varying item of the estrats, cost you five francs a day; your bill was never offered you until you asked it; and if you were out of luck's way, you might depart for where you pleased and leave it pending.

IV

Theoretically, the house was open to all comers; practically, it was a kind of club. The guests protected themselves, and, in so doing, they protected Siron. Formal manners being laid aside, essential courtesy was the more rigidly exacted; the new arrival had to feel the pulse of the society; and a breach of its undefined observances was promptly punished. A man might be as plain, as dull, as slovenly, as free of speech as he desired; but to a touch of presumption or a word of hectoring these free Barbizonians were as sensitive as a tea-party of maiden ladies. I have seen people driven forth from Barbizon; it would be difficult to say in words what they had done, but they deserved their fate. They had shown themselves unworthy to enjoy these corporate freedoms; they had pushed themselves; they had "made their head," they wanted tact to appreciate the "fine shades" of Barbizonian etiquette. And once they were condemned, the process of extrusion was ruthless in its cruelty; after one evening with the formidable Bodmer, the Baily of our commonwealth, the erring stranger was beheld no more; he rose exceedingly early the next day, and the first coach conveyed him from the scene of his discomfiture. These sentences of banishment were never, in my knowledge, delivered against an artist; such would, I believe, have been illegal; but the odd and pleasant fact is this, that they were never needed. Painters, sculptors, writers, singers, I have seen all of these in Barbizon; and some were sulky, and some blatant and inane; but one and all entered at once into the spirit of the association. This singular society is purely French, a creature of French virtues, and possibly of French defects. It can not be imitated by the English. The roughness, the impatience, the more obvious selfishness, and even the more ardent friendships of the Anglo-Saxon, speedily dismember such a commonwealth. But this random gathering of young French painters, with neither apparatus nor parade of government, yet kept the life of the place upon a certain footing, insensibly imposed their

etiquette upon the docile, and by caustic speech enforced their edicts against the unwelcome. To think of it is to wonder the more at the strange failure of their race upon the larger theater. This inbred civility—to use the word in its completest meaning—this natural and facile adjustment of contending liberties, seems all that is required to make a governable nation and a just and prosperous country.

Our society, thus purged and guarded, was full of high spirits, of laughter, and of the initiative of youth. The few elder men who joined us were still young at heart, and took the key from their companions. We returned from long stations in the fortifying air, our blood renewed by the sunshine, our spirits refreshed by the silence of the forest; the Babel of loud voices sounded good; we fell to eat and play like the natural man; and in the high inn chamber, paneled with indifferent pictures and lit by candles guttering in the night air, the talk and laughter sounded far into the night. It was a good place and a good life for any naturally minded youth; better yet for the student of painting, and perhaps best of all for the student of letters. He, too, was saturated in this atmosphere of style; he was shut out from the disturbing currents of the world, he might forget that there existed other and more pressing interests than that of art.

But, in such a place, it was hardly possible to write; he could not drug his conscience, like the painter, by the production of listless studies; he saw himself idle among many who were apparently, and some who were really, employed; and what with the impulse of increasing health and the continual provocation of romantic scenes, he became tormented with the desire to work. He enjoyed a strenuous idleness full of visions; hearty meals, long, sweltering walks, mirth among companions; and still floating like music through his brain, foresights of great works that Shakespeare might be proud to have conceived, headless epics, glorious torsos of dramas, and words that were alive with import. So in youth, like Moses from the mountain, we have sights of that House

Beautiful of art which we shall never enter. They are dreams and unsubstantial; visions of style that repose upon no base of human meaning; the last heart-throbs of that excited amateur who has to die in all of us before the artist can be born. But they come to us in such a rainbow of glory that all subsequent achievement appears dull and earthy in comparison. We were all artists; almost all in the age of illusion, cultivating an imaginary genius, and walking in the strains of some deceiving Ariel; small wonder, indeed, if we were happy! But art, of whatever nature, is a kind mistress; and though these dreams of youth fall by their own baselessness, others succeed, graver and more substantial; the symptoms change, the amiable malady endures, and still, at an equal distance, the House Beautiful shines upon its hilltop.

V

Grez lies out of the forest, down by the bright river. It boasts a mill, an ancient church, a castle, and a bridge of many sterlings. And the bridge is a piece of public property; anonymously famous; beaming on the incurious dilettante from the walls of a hundred exhibitions. I have seen it in the Salon; I have seen it in the Academy; I have seen it in the last French Exposition, excellently done by Bloomer. Long-suffering bridge! And if you visit Grez to-morrow, you shall find another generation, camped at the bottom of Chevillon's garden under their white umbrellas, and doggedly painting it again.

The bridge taken for granted, Grez is a less inspiring place than Barbizon. I give it the palm over Cernay. There is something ghastly in the great empty village square of Cernay, with the inn tables standing in one corner, as though the stage were set for rustic opera, and in the early morning all the painters breaking their fast upon white wine under the windows of the villagers. It is vastly different to awake in Grez, to go down the green inn garden, to find the river streaming through the bridge, and to see the dawn begin across the poplared level. The

meals are laid in the cool arbor, under fluttering leaves. The splash of oars and bathers, the bathing costumes out to dry, the trim canoes beside the jetty, tell of a society that has an eye to pleasure. There is "something to do" at Grez. Perhaps, for that very reason, I can recall no such enduring ardors, no such glories of exhilaration, as among the solemn groves and uneventful hours of Barbizon.

This "something to do" is a great enemy to joy; it is a way out of it; you wreak your high spirits on some cut and dry employment, and behold them gone! But Grez is a merry place after its kind: pretty to see and merry to inhabit. The course of its pellucid river, whether up or down, is full of gentle attractions for the navigator; islanded reed-mazes where, in autumn, the red berries cluster; the mirrored and inverted images of trees; lilies, and mills, and the foam and thunder of weirs. And of all noble sweeps of roadway, none is nobler, on a windy dusk, than the highroad to Nemours between its lines of talking poplar.

But even Grez is changed. The old inn, long shored and trussed and buttressed, fell at length under the mere weight of years, and the place as it was is but a fading image in the memory of former guests. They, indeed, recall the ancient wooden stair; they recall the rainy evening, the wide hearth, the blaze of the twig fire, and the company that gathered round the pillar in the kitchen. But the material fabric is now dust; soon, with the last of its inhabitants, its very memory shall follow; and they, in their turn, shall suffer the same law, and, both in name and lineament, vanish from the world of men. "For remembrance of the old house's sake," as Pepys once quaintly put it, let me tell one story. When the tide of invasion swept over France, two foreign painters were left stranded and penniless in Grez; and there, until the war was over, the Chevillons ungrudgingly harbored them. It was difficult to obtain supplies; but the two waifs were still welcome to the best, sat down daily with the family to table, and at the due intervals were supplied with clean napkins, which they scrupled to employ. Madam Chevillon ob-

served the fact and reprimanded them. But they stood firm; eat they must, but having no money they would soil no napkins.

VI

Nemours and Moret, for all they are so picturesque, have been little visited by painters. They are, indeed, too populous; they have manners of their own, and might resist the drastic process of colonization. Montigny has been somewhat strangely neglected. I never knew it inhabited but once, when Will H. Low installed himself there with a barrel of piquette, and entertained his friends in a leafy trellis above the weir, in sight of the green country, and to the music of the falling water. It was a most airy, quaint, and pleasant place of residence, just too rustic to be stagy; and from my memories of the place in general, and that garden trellis in particular—at morning, visited by birds, or at night, when the dew fell and the stars were of the party—I am inclined to think perhaps too favorably of the future of Montigny. Chailly-en-Bière has outlived all things, and lies dustily slumbering in the plain—the cemetery of itself. The great road remains to testify of its former bustle of postilions and carriage bells; and, like memorial tablets, there still hang in the inn room the paintings of a former generation, dead or decorated long ago. In my time, one man only, greatly daring, dwelt there. From time to time he would walk over to Barbizon, like a shade revisiting the glimpses of the moon, and after some communication with flesh and blood return to his austere hermitage. But even he, when I last revisited the forest, had come to Barbizon for good, and closed the roll of Chaillyites. It may revive —but I much doubt it. Achères and Recloses still wait a pioneer; Bourron is out of the question, being merely Grez over again, without the river, the bridge, or the beauty; and of all the possible places on the western side Marlotte alone remains to be discussed. I scarcely know Marlotte, and, very likely for that reason, am not much in love with it. It seems a glaring and unsightly hamlet.

The inn of Mother Antonine is unattractive; and its more reputable rival, though comfortable enough, is commonplace. Marlotte has a name; it is famous; if I were the young painter I would leave it alone in its glory.

VII

These are the words of an old stager; and though time is a good conservative in forest places, much may be untrue to-day. Many of us have passed Arcadian days there and moved on, but yet left a portion of our souls behind us buried in the woods. I would not dig for these reliquiæ, they are incommunicable treasures that will not enrich the finder; and yet there they lie, interred below great oaks or scattered along forest paths, stores of youth's dynamite and dear remembrances. And as one generation passes on and renovates the field of tillage for the next, I entertain a fancy that when the young men of to-day go forth into the forest they shall find the air still vitalized by the spirits of their predecessors, and, like those "unheard melodies" that are the sweetest of all, the memory of our laughter shall still haunt the field of trees. Those merry voices that in woods call the wanderer further, those thrilling silences and whispers of the groves, surely in Fontainebleau they must be vocal of me and my companions? We are not content to pass away entirely from the scenes of our delight; we would leave, if but in gratitude, a pillar and a legend.

One generation after another fall like honey-bees upon this memorable forest, rifle its sweets, pack themselves with vital memories, and when the theft is consummated depart again into life richer, but poorer also. The forest, indeed, they have possessed, from that day forward it is theirs indissolubly, and they will return to walk in it at night in the fondest of their dreams, and use it for ever in their books and pictures. Yet when they made their packets, and put up their notes and sketches, something, it should seem, had been forgotten. A projection of themselves shall appear to haunt unfriended these scenes

of happiness, a natural child of fancy, begotten and forgotten unawares. Over the whole field of our wanderings such fetishes are still traveling like indefatigable bagmen; but the imps of Fontainebleau, as of all beloved spots, are very long of life, and memory is piously unwilling to forget their orphanage. If anywhere about that wood you meet my airy bantling, greet him with tenderness. He was a pleasant lad, though now abandoned. And when it comes to your turn to quit the forest may you leave behind you such another; no Antony or Werther, let us hope, no tearful whipster, but, as becomes this not uncheerful and most active age in which we figure, the child of happy hours.

No art, it may be said, was ever perfect, and not many noble, that has not been mirthfully conceived. And no man, it may be added, was ever anything but a wet blanket and a cross to his companions who boasted not a copious spirit of enjoyment. Whether as man or artist, let the youth make haste to Fontainebleau, and once there let him address himself to the spirit of the place; he will learn more from sketching than from studies, although both are necessary; and if he can get into his heart the gaiety and inspiration of the woods he will have gone far to undo the evil of his sketches. A spirit once well strung up to the concert-pitch of the primeval out-of-doors will hardly dare to finish a study and magniloquently ticket it a picture. The incommunicable thrill of things, that is the tuning-fork by which we test the flatness of our art. Here it is that Nature teaches and condemns, and still spurs up to further effort and new failure. Thus it is that she sets us blushing at our ignorant and tepid works; and the more we find of these inspiring shocks the less shall we be apt to love the literal in our productions. In all sciences and senses the letter kills; and to-day, when cackling human geese express their ignorant condemnation of all studio pictures, it is a lesson most useful to be learned. Let the young painter go to Fontainebleau, and while he stupefies himself with studies that teach him the mechanical side of his trade, let him walk in the great air, and be a servant of mirth, and not pick and botanize, but

wait upon the moods of nature. So he will learn—or learn not to forget—the poetry of life and earth, which, when he has acquired his track, will save him from joyless reproductions.

I must add a note upon the illustrations, not to criticize, for they are all graceful, and the Bridge of Grez a little triumph, but to explain that, in the views of the Bas-Bréau, the Reine Blanche, and the Paris Road, Mr. Henley has, unfortunately—perhaps inevitably, for no two men see with the same pair of eyes—not found the point of view referred to in my text. Thus, with regard to the first, I described the appearance of the great central grove about the Bouquet de l'Empereur; Mr. Henley, on the other hand, has drawn the thicket either by the *bornage* or the road to the Carrefour de l'Epine—both rightly enough portions of the Bas-Bréau, but portions of a great dissemblance. In the Reine Blanche, again, the peculiar character referred to in the text, of great trees overshadowing boulders, has not found illustration in the cut. Mr. Henley and the writer, both good Barbizonians, and both studious of fidelity, have each followed his own taste and given different readings.

FOREST NOTES

ON THE PLAIN

PERHAPS the reader knows already the aspect of the great levels of the Gâtinais, where they border with the wooded hills of Fontainebleau. Here and there a few gray rocks creep out of the forest as if to sun themselves. Here and there a few apple-trees stand together on a knoll. The quaint, undignified tartan of a myriad small fields dies out into the distance; the strips blend and disappear; and the dead flat lies forth open and empty, with no accident save perhaps a thin line of trees or faint church-spire against the sky. Solemn and vast at all times, in spite of pettiness in the near details, the impression becomes more solemn and vast toward evening. The sun goes down, a swollen orange, as it were into the sea. A blue-clad peasant rides home, with a harrow smoking behind him among the dry clods. Another still works with his wife in their little strip. An immense shadow fills the plain; these people stand in it up to their shoulders; and their heads, as they stoop over their work and rise again, are relieved from time to time against the golden sky.

These peasant farmers are well off nowadays, and not by any means overworked; but somehow you always see in them the historical representatives of the serf of yore, and think not so much of present times, which may be prosperous enough, as of the old days when the peasant was taxed beyond possibility of payment, and lived, in Michelet's image, like a hare between two furrows. These very people now weeding their patch under the broad sunset, that very man and his wife, it seems to us, have

suffered all the wrongs of France. It is they who have been their country's scapegoat for long ages; they who, generation after generation, have sowed and not reaped, reaped and another has garnered; and who have now entered into their reward, and enjoy their good things in their turn. For the days are gone by when the Seigneur ruled and profited. "Le Seigneur," says the old formula, "enferme ses manants comme sous porte et gonds, du ciel à la terre. Tout est à lui, forêt chenue, oiseau dans l'air, poisson dans l'eau, bête au buisson, l'onde qui coule, la cloche dont le son au loin roule." Such was his old state of sovereignty, a local god rather than a mere king. And now you may ask yourself where he is, and look round for vestiges of my late lord, and in all the countryside there is no trace of him but his forlorn and fallen mansion. At the end of a long avenue, now sown with grain, in the midst of a close full of cypresses and lilacs, ducks and crowing chanticleers and droning bees, the old château lifts its red chimneys and peaked roofs and turning vanes into the wind and sun. There is a glad spring bustle in the air, perhaps, and the lilacs are all in flower, and the creepers green about the broken balustrade; but no spring shall revive the honor of the place. Old women of the people, little children of the people, saunter and gambol in the walled court or feed the ducks in the neglected moat. Plow-horses, mighty of limb, browse in the long stables. The dial-hand on the clock waits for some better hour. Out on the plain, where hot sweat trickles into men's eyes, and the spade goes in deep and comes up slowly, perhaps the peasant may feel a movement of joy at his heart when he thinks that these spacious chimneys are now cold, which have so often blazed and flickered upon gay folk at supper, while he and his hollow-eyed children watched through the night with empty bellies and cold feet. And perhaps, as he raises his head and sees the forest lying like a coast line of low hills along the sea-like level of the plain, perhaps forest and château hold no unsimilar place in his affections. If the château was my lord's the forest was my lord the king's; neither of them for this poor Jacques. If he thought to eke out his meager

way of life by some petty theft of wood for the fire, or for a new roof-tree, he found himself face to face with a whole department, from the Grand Master of the Woods and Waters, who was a high-born lord, down to the common sergeant, who was a peasant like himself, and wore stripes or a bandolier by way of uniform. For the first offense, by the Salic law, there was a fine of fifteen sols; and should a man be taken more than once in fault, or circumstances aggravate the color of his guilt, he might be whipped, branded, or hanged. There was a hangman over at Melun, and, I doubt not, a fine tall gibbet hard by the town gate, where Jacques might see his fellows dangle against the sky as he went to market.

And then, if he lived near to a cover, there would be the more hares and rabbits to eat out his harvest, and the more hunters to trample it down. My lord has a new horn from England. He has laid out seven francs in decorating it with silver and gold, and fitting it with a silken leash to hang about his shoulder. The hounds have been on a pilgrimage to the shrine of Saint Mesmer, or Saint Hubert in the Ardennes, or some other holy intercessor who has made a specialty of the health of hunting-dogs. In the gray dawn the game was turned and the branch broken by our best piqueur. A rare day's hunting lies before us. Wind a jolly flourish, sound the *bien-aller* with all your lungs. Jacques must stand by, hat in hand, while the quarry and hound and huntsman sweep across his field, and a year's sparing and laboring is as though it had not been.

If he can see the ruin with a good enough grace, who knows but he may fall in favor with my lord; who knows but his son may become the last and least among the servants at his lordship's kennel—one of the two poor varlets who get no wages and sleep at night among the hounds.[1]

For all that, the forest has been of use to Jacques, not only warming him with fallen wood, but giving him shelter

[1] "Deux poures varlez qui n'ont nulz gages et qui gissoient la nuit avec les chiens." See Champollion-Figeac's *Louis et Charles d'Orléans*, i. 63, and for my lord's English horn, *ibid.* 96.

in days of sore trouble, when my lord of the château, with all his troopers and trumpets, had been beaten from field after field into some ultimate fastness, or lay oversea in an English prison. In these dark days, when the watch on the church steeple saw the smoke of burning villages on the skyline, or a clump of spears and fluttering pennon drawing nigh across the plain, these good folk gat them up, with all their household gods, into the wood, whence, from some high spur, their timid scouts might overlook the coming and going of the marauders, and see the harvest ridden down, and church and cottage go up to heaven all night in flame. It was but an unhomely refuge that the woods afforded, where they must abide all change of weather and keep house with wolves and vipers. Often there was none left alive, when they returned, to show the old divisions of field from field. And yet, as times went, when the wolves entered at night into depopulated Paris, and perhaps De Retz was passing by with a company of demons like himself, even in these caves and thickets there were glad hearts and grateful prayers.

Once or twice, as I say, in the course of the ages, the forest may have served the peasant well, but at heart it is a royal forest, and noble by old association. These woods have rung to the horns of all the kings of France, from Philip Augustus downward. They have seen Saint Louis exercise the dogs he brought with him from Egypt; Francis I. go a-hunting with ten thousand horses in his train; and Peter of Russia following his first stag. And so they are still haunted for the imagination by royal hunts and progresses, and peopled with the faces of memorable men of yore. And this distinction is not only in virtue of the pastime of dead monarchs. Great events, great revolutions, great cycles in the affairs of men, have here left their note, here taken shape in some significant and dramatic situation. It was hence that Guise and his leaguers led Charles the Ninth a prisoner to Paris. Here booted and spurred, and with all his dogs about him, Napoleon met the Pope beside a woodland cross. Here, on his way to Elba not so long after, he kissed the eagle of

The Village Street at Grez

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the Old Guard, and spoke words of passionate farewell to his soldiers. And here, after Waterloo, rather than yield its ensign to the new power, one of his faithful regiments burned that memorial of so much toil and glory on the Grand Master's table, and drank its dust in brandy, as a devout priest consumes the remnants of the Host.

IN THE SEASON

Close into the edge of the forest, so close that the trees of the *bornage* stand pleasantly about the last houses, sits a certain small and very quiet village. There is but one street, and that, not long ago, was a green lane, where the cattle browsed between the doorsteps. As you go up this street, drawing ever nearer the beginning of the wood, you will arrive at last before an inn where artists lodge. To the door (for I imagine it to be six o'clock on some fine summer's even), half a dozen, or maybe half a score, of people have brought out chairs, and now sit sunning themselves, and waiting the omnibus from Melun. If you go on into the court you will find as many more, some in the billiard-room over absinthe and a match of corks, some without over a last cigar and a vermouth. The doves coo and flutter from the dovecot; Hortense is drawing water from the well; and as all the rooms open into the court, you can see the white-capped cook over the furnace in the kitchen, and some idle painter, who has stored his canvases and washed his brushes, jangling a waltz on the crazy, tongue-tied piano in the salle-à-manger. *"Edmond, encore un vermout,"* cries a man in velveteen, adding in a tone of apologetic afterthought, *"un double, s'il vous plaît."* Where are you working?" asks one in pure white linen from top to toe. "At the Carrefour de l'Epine," returns the other in corduroy (they are all gaitered, by the way). "I couldn't do a thing to it. I ran out of white. Where were you?" "I wasn't working, I was looking for motives." Here is an outbreak of jubilation, and a lot of men clustering together about some newcomer with outreached hands; perhaps the "correspondence" has come in and brought So-and-so from Paris, or perhaps

it is only So-and-so who has walked over from Chailly to dinner.

"*A table, Messieurs!*" cries M. Siron, bearing through the court the first tureen of soup. And immediately the company begins to settle down about the long tables in the dining-room, framed all round with sketches of all degrees of merit and demerit. There's the big picture of the huntsman winding a horn with a dead boar between his legs, and his legs—well, his legs in stockings. And here is the little picture of a raw mutton-chop, in which Such-a-one knocked a hole last summer with no worse a missile than a plum from the dessert. And under all these works of art so much eating goes forward, so much drinking, so much jabbering in French and English, that it would do your heart good merely to keep and listen at the door. One man is telling how they all went last year to the fête at Fleury, and another how well So-and-so would sing of an evening; and here are a third and fourth making plans for the whole future of their lives; and there is a fifth imitating a conjurer and making faces on his clenched fist, surely of all arts the most difficult and admirable! A sixth has eaten his fill, lights a cigarette, and resigns himself to digestion. A seventh has just dropped in, and calls for soup. Number eight, meanwhile, has left the table, and is once more trampling the poor piano under powerful and uncertain fingers.

Dinner over, people drop outside to smoke and chat. Perhaps we go along to visit our friends at the other end of the village, where there is always a good welcome and a good talk, and perhaps some pickled oysters and white wine to close the evening. Or a dance is organized in the dining-room, and the piano exhibits all its paces under manful jockeying, to the light of the three or four candles and a lamp or two, while the waltzers move to and fro upon the wooden floor, and sober men, who are not given to such light pleasures, get up on the table or the sideboard, and sit there looking on approvingly over a pipe and a tumbler of wine. Or sometimes—suppose my lady moon looks forth, and the court from out the half-lit dining-room seems nearly as bright as by day, and the

light picks out the window-panes, and makes a clear shadow under every vine leaf on the wall—sometimes a picnic is proposed, and a basket made ready, and a good procession formed in front of the hotel. The two trumpeters in honor go before; and as we file down the long alley, and up through devious footpaths among rocks and pine-trees, with every here and there a dark passage of shadow, and every here and there a spacious outlook over moonlit woods, these two precede us and sound many a jolly flourish as they walk. We gather ferns and dry boughs into the cavern, and soon a good blaze flutters the shadows of the old bandits' haunt, and shows shapely beards and comely faces and toilets ranged about the wall. The bowl is lit, and the punch is burnt and sent round in scalding thimblefuls. So a good hour or two may pass with song and jest. And then we go home in the moonlight morning, straggling a good deal among the birch tufts and the boulders, but ever called together again, as one of our leaders winds his horn. Perhaps some one of the party will not heed the summons, but chooses out some by-way of his own. As he follows the winding sandy road, he hears the flourishes grow fainter and fainter in the distance, and die finally out, and still walks on in the strange coolness and silence and between the crisp lights and shadows of the moonlit woods, until suddenly the bell rings out the hour from far-away Chailly, and he starts to find himself alone. No surf-bell on forlorn and perilous shores, no passing knell over the busy market-place, can speak with a more heavy and disconsolate tongue to human ears. Each stroke calls up a host of ghostly reverberations in his mind. And as he stands rooted, it has grown once more so utterly silent that it seems to him he might hear the church-bells ring the hour out all the world over, not at Chailly only, but in Paris, and away in outlandish cities, and in the village on the river, where his childhood passed between the sun and flowers.

The woods by night, in all their uncanny effect, are not rightly to be understood until you can compare them with the woods by day. The stillness of the medium, the floor of glittering sand, these trees that go streaming up like monstrous sea-weeds and waver in the moving winds like the weeds in submarine currents, all these set the mind working on the thought of what you may have seen off a foreland or over the side of a boat, and make you feel like a diver, down in the quiet water, fathoms below the tumbling, transitory surface of the sea. And yet in itself, as I say, the strangeness of these nocturnal solitudes is not to be felt fully without the sense of contrast. You must have risen in the morning and seen the woods as they are by day, kindled and colored in the sun's light; you must have felt the odor of innumerable trees at even, the unsparing heat along the forest roads, and the coolness of the groves.

And on the first morning you will doubtless rise betimes. If you have not been wakened before by the visit of some adventurous pigeon, you will be awakened as soon as the sun can reach your window—for there are no blinds or shutters to keep him out—and the room, with its bare wood floor and bare whitewashed walls, shines all round you in a sort of glory of reflected lights. You may doze a while longer by snatches, or lie awake to study the charcoal men and dogs and horses with which former occupants have defiled the partitions: Thiers, with wily profile; local celebrities, pipe in hand; or, maybe, a romantic landscape splashed in oil. Meanwhile artist after artist drops into the salle-à-manger for coffee, and then shoulders easel, sunshade, stool, and paint-box, bound into a fagot, and sets off for what he calls his "motive." And artist after artist, as he goes out of the village, carries with him a little following of dogs. For the dogs, who belong only nominally to any special master, hang about the gate of the forest all day long, and whenever any one goes by who hits their fancy, profit by his escort, and go forth with him to play an hour or two at hunting. They would

like to be under the trees all day. But they can not go alone. They require a pretext. And so they take the passing artist as an excuse to go into the woods, as they might take a walking-stick as an excuse to bathe. With quick ears, long spines, and bandy legs, or perhaps as tall as a greyhound and with a bulldog's head, this company of mongrels will trot by your side all day and come home with you at night, still showing white teeth and wagging stunted tail. Their good humor is not to be exhausted. You may pelt them with stones if you please, and all they will do is to give you a wider berth. If once they come out with you, to you they will remain faithful, and with you return; although if you meet them next morning in the street, it is as like as not they will cut you with a countenance of brass.

The forest—a strange thing for an Englishman—is very destitute of birds. This is no country where every patch of wood among the meadows gives up an incense of song, and every valley wandered through by a streamlet rings and reverberates from side to side with a profusion of clear notes. And this rarity of birds is not to be regretted on its own account only. For the insects prosper in their absence, and become as one of the plagues of Egypt. Ants swarm in the hot sand; mosquitoes drone their nasal drone; wherever the sun finds a hole in the roof of the forest, you see a myriad transparent creatures coming and going in the shaft of light; and even betweenwhiles, even where there is no incursion of sun-rays into the dark arcade of the wood, you are conscious of a continual drift of insects, an ebb and flow of infinitesimal living things between the trees. Nor are insects the only evil creatures that haunt the forest. For you may plump into a cave among the rocks, and find yourself face to face with a wild boar, or see a crooked viper slither across the road.

Perhaps you may set yourself down in the bay between two spreading beech-roots with a book on your lap, and be awakened all of a sudden by a friend: "I say, just keep where you are, will you? You make the jolliest motive." And you reply: "Well, I don't mind, if I may

smoke." And thereafter the hours go idly by. Your friend at the easel labors doggedly a little way off, in the wide shadow of the tree; and yet farther, across a strait of glaring sunshine, you see another painter, encamped in the shadow of another tree, and up to his waist in the fern. You can not watch your own effigy growing out of the white trunk, and the trunk beginning to stand forth from the rest of the wood, and the whole picture getting dappled over with the flecks of sun that slip through the leaves overhead, and, as a wind goes by and sets the trees a-talking, flicker hither and thither like butterflies of light. But you know it is going forward; and, out of emulation with the painter, get ready your own palette, and lay out the color for a woodland scene in words.

Your tree stands in a hollow paved with fern and heather, set in a basin of low hills, and scattered over with rocks and junipers. All the open is steeped in pitiless sunlight. Everything stands out as though it were cut in cardboard, every color is strained into its highest key. The boulders are some of them upright and dead like monolithic castles, some of them prone like sleeping cattle. The junipers—looking, in their soiled and ragged mourning, like some funeral procession that has gone seeking the place of sepulcher three hundred years and more in wind and rain—are daubed in forcibly against the glowing ferns and heather. Every tassel of their rusty foliage is defined with prae-Raphaelite minuteness. And a sorry figure they make out there in the sun, like misbegotten yew-trees! The scene is all pitched in a key of color so peculiar, and lit up with such a discharge of violent sunlight, as a man might live fifty years in England and not see.

Meanwhile at your elbow some one tunes up a song, words of Ronsard to a pathetic tremulous air, of how the poet loved his mistress long ago, and pressed on her the flight of time, and told her how white and quiet the dead lay under the stones, and how the boat dipped and pitched as the shades embarked for the passionless land. Yet a little while, sang the poet, and there shall be no more love;

only to sit and remember loves that might have been. There is a falling flourish in the air that remains in the memory and comes back in incongruous places, on the seat of hansoms or in the warm bed at night, with something of a forest savor.

"You can get up now," says the painter; "I'm at the background."

And so up you get, stretching yourself and go your way into the wood, the daylight becoming richer and more golden, and the shadows stretching farther into the open. A cool air comes along the highways, and the scents awaken. The fir-trees breathe abroad their ozone. Out of unknown thickets comes forth the soft, secret, aromatic odor of the woods, not like a smell of the free heaven, but as though court ladies, who had known these paths in ages long gone by, still walked in the summer evenings, and shed from their brocades a breath of musk or bergamot upon the woodland winds. One side of the long avenues is still kindled with the sun, the other is plunged in transparent shadow. Over the trees the west begins to burn like a furnace; and the painters gather up their chattels, and go down, by avenue or footpath, to the plain.

A PLEASURE PARTY

As this excursion is a matter of some length, and, moreover, we go in force, we have set aside our usual vehicle, the pony cart, and ordered a large wagonette from Lejosne's. It has been waiting for near an hour, while one went to pack a knapsack, and t'other hurried over his toilet and coffee; but now it is filled from end to end with merry folk in summer attire, the coachman cracks his whip, and amid much applause from round the inn door off we rattle at a spanking trot. The way lies through the forest, up hill and down dale, and by beech and pine wood, in the cheerful morning sunshine. The English get down at all the ascents and walk on ahead for exercise; the French are mightily entertained at this, and keep coyly underneath the tilt. As we go we carry with us a pleasant noise of laughter and light speech, and some

one will be always breaking out into a bar or two of opera bouffe. Before we get to the Route Ronde here comes Desprez, the colorman from Fontainebleau, trudging across on his weekly peddle with a case of merchandise; and it is "Desprez, leave me some malachite green"; "Desprez, leave me so much canvas"; "Desprez, leave me this, or leave me that"; M. Desprez standing the while in the sunlight with grave face and many salutations. The next interruption is more important. For some time back we have had the sound of cannon in our ears; and now, a little past Franchard, we find a mounted trooper holding a led horse, who brings the wagonette to a stand. The artillery is practising in the Quadrilateral, it appears; passage along the Route Ronde formally interdicted for the moment. There is nothing for it but to draw up at the glaring crossroads, and get down to make fun with the notorious Cocardon, the most ungainly and ill-bred dog of all the ungainly and ill-bred dogs of Barbizon, or clamber about the sandy banks. And meanwhile the Doctor, with sun umbrella, wide Panama, and patriarchal beard, is busy wheedling and (for aught the rest of us know) bribing the too facile sentry. His speech is smooth and dulcet, his manner dignified and insinuating. It is not for nothing that the Doctor has voyaged all the world over, and speaks all languages from French to Patagonian. He has not come home from perilous journeys to be thwarted by a corporal of horse. And so we soon see the soldier's mouth relax, and his shoulders imitate a relenting heart. *"En voiture, Messieurs, Mesdames,"* sings the Doctor; and on we go again at a good round pace, for black care follows hard after us, and discretion prevails not a little over valor in some timorous spirits of the party. At any moment we may meet the sergeant, who will send us back. At any moment we may encounter a flying shell, which will send us somewhere farther off than Grez.

Grez—for that is our destination—has been highly recommended for its beauty. *"Il y a de l'eau,"* people have said, with an emphasis, as if that settled the question, which, for a French mind, I am rather led to think it does.

And Grez, when we get there, is indeed a place worthy of some praise. It lies out of the forest, a cluster of houses, with an old bridge, an old castle in ruin, and a quaint old church. The inn garden descends in terraces to the river; stable-yard, kale-yard, orchard, and a space of lawn, fringed with rushes and embellished with a green arbor. On the opposite bank there is a reach of English-looking plain, set thickly with willows and poplars. And between the two lies the river, clear and deep, and full of reeds and floating lilies. Water plants cluster about the starlings of the long low bridge, and stand half-way up upon the piers in green luxuriance. They catch the dipped oar with long antennæ, and checker the slimy bottom with the shadow of their leaves. And the river wanders hither and thither among the islets, and is smothered and broken up by the reeds, like an old building in the lithe, hardy arms of the climbing ivy. You may watch the box where the good man of the inn keeps fish alive for his kitchen, one oily ripple following another over the top of the yellow deal. And you can hear a splashing and a prattle of voices from the shed under the old kirk, where the village women wash and wash all day among the fish and water-lilies. It seems as if linen washed there should be specially cool and sweet.

We have come here for the river. And no sooner have we all bathed than we board the two shallops and push off gaily, and go gliding under the trees and gathering a great treasure of water-lilies. Some one sings; some trail their hands in the cool water; some lean over the gunwale to see the image of the tall poplars far below, and the shadow of the boat, with the balanced oars and their own head protruded, glide smoothly over the yellow floor of the stream.

At last, the day declining—all silent and happy, and up to the knees in the wet lilies—we punt slowly back again to the landing-place beside the bridge. There is a wish for solitude on all. One hides himself in the arbor with a cigarette; another goes a walk in the country with Cocardon; a third inspects the church. And it is not till dinner is on the table, and the inn's best wine goes round

from glass to glass, that we begin to throw off the restraint and fuse once more into jolly fellowship.

Half the party are to return to-night with the wagonette; and some of the others, loath to break up good company will go with them a bit of the way and drink a stirrup-cup at Marlotte. It is dark in the wagonette, and not so merry as it might have been. The coachman loses the road. So-and-so tries to light fireworks with the most indifferent success. Some sing, but the rest are too weary to applaud; and it seems as if the festival were fairly at an end:

Nous avons fait la noce,
Rentrons à nos foyers!

And such is the burden, even after we have come to Marlotte and taken our places in the court at Mother Antonine's. There is punch on the long table out in the open air, where the guests dine in summer weather. The candles flare in the night wind, and the faces round the punch are lit up, with shifting emphasis, against a background of complete and solid darkness. It is all picturesque enough; but the fact is, we are aweary. We yawn; we are out of the vein; we have made the wedding, as the song says, and now, for pleasure's sake, let's make an end on't. When here comes striding into the court, booted to mid-thigh, spurred and splashed, in a jacket of green cord, the great, famous, and redoubtable Blank; and in a moment the fire kindles again, and the night is witness of our laughter as he imitates Spaniards, Germans, Englishmen, picture dealers, all eccentric ways of speaking and thinking, with a possession, a fury, a strain of mind and voice, that would rather suggest a nervous crisis than a desire to please. We are as merry as ever when the trap sets forth again, and say farewell noisily to all the good folk going further. Then, as we are far enough from thoughts of sleep, we visit Blank in his quaint house, and sit an hour or so in a great tapestried chamber, laid with furs, littered with sleeping hounds, and lit up, in fantastic shadow and shine, by a wood-fire in a medieval chimney. And then we plod back through the darkness to the inn beside the river.

How quick bright things come to confusion! When we arise next morning, the gray showers fall steadily, the trees hang limp, and the face of the stream is spoiled with dimpling rain-drops. Yesterday's lilies encumber the garden walk, or begin, dismally enough, their voyage toward the Seine and the salt sea. A sickly shimmer lies upon the dripping house roofs, and all the color is washed out of the green and golden landscape of last night, as though an envious man had taken a water-color sketch and blotted it together with a sponge. We go out a-walking in the wet roads. But the roads about Grez have a trick of their own. They go on for a while among clumps of willows and patches of vine, and then, suddenly and without any warning, cease and determine in some miry hollow or upon some bald knowe; and you have a short period of hope, then right-about face, and back the way you came! So we draw about the kitchen fire and play a round game of cards for ha'pence, or go to the billiard-room for a match at corks; and by one consent a messenger is sent over for the wagonette—Grez shall be left to-morrow.

To-morrow dawns so fair that two of the party agree to walk back for exercise, and let their knapsacks follow by the trap. I need hardly say they are neither of them French; for, of all English phrases, the phrase "for exercise" is the least comprehensible across the Straits of Dover. All goes well for a while with the pedestrians. The wet woods are full of scents in the noontide. At a certain cross, where there is a guard-house, they make a halt, for the forester's wife is the daughter of their good host at Barbizon. And so there they are hospitably received by the comely woman, with one child in her arms and another prattling and tottering at her gown, and drink some sirup of quince in the back parlor, with a map of the forest on the wall, and some prints of love-affairs and the great Napoleon hunting. As they draw near the Quadrilateral, and hear once more the report of the big guns, they take a by-road to avoid the sentries, and go on a while somewhat vaguely, with the sound of the cannon in their ears and the rain beginning to fall. The ways grow wider

and sandier; here and there are real sandhills, as though by the seashore; the fir-wood is open and grows in clumps upon the hillocks, and the race of sign-posts is no more. One begins to look at the other doubtfully. "I am sure we should keep more to the right," says one; and the other is just as certain they should hold to the left. And now, suddenly, the heavens open, and the rain falls "sheer and strong and loud," as out of a shower-bath. In a moment they are as wet as shipwrecked sailors. They can not see out of their eyes for the drift, and the water churns and gurgles in their boots. They leave the track and try across country with a gambler's desperation, for it seems as if it were impossible to make the situation worse; and, for the next hour, go scrambling from boulder to boulder, or plod along paths that are now no more than rivulets, and across waste clearings where the scattered shells and broken fir-trees tell all too plainly of the cannon in the distance. And meantime the cannon grumble out responses to the grumbling thunder. There is such a mixture of melodrama and sheer discomfort about all this, it is at once so gray and so lurid, that it is far more agreeable to read and write about by the chimney-corner than to suffer in the person. At last they chance on the right path, and make Franchard in the early evening, the sorriest pair of wanderers that ever welcomed English ale. Thence, by the Bois d'Hyver, the Ventes-Alexandre, and the Pins Brulés, to the clean hostelry, dry clothes, and dinner.

THE WOODS IN SPRING

I think you will like the forest best in the sharp early springtime, when it is just beginning to reawaken, and innumerable violets peep from among the fallen leaves; when two or three people at most sit down to dinner, and, at table, you will do well to keep a rug about your knees, for the nights are chill, and the salle-à-manger opens on the court. There is less to distract the attention, for one thing, and the forest is more itself. It is not bedotted with artists' sunshades as with unknown mushrooms, nor

bestrewn with the remains of English picnics. The hunting still goes on, and at any moment your heart may be brought into your mouth as you hear far-away horns; or you may be told by an agitated peasant that the vicomte has gone up the avenue, not ten minutes since, *"à fond de train, monsieur, et avec douze piqueurs."*

If you go up to some coign of vantage in the system of low hills that permeates the forest, you will see many different tracts of country, each of its own cold and melancholy neutral tint, and all mixed together and mingled the one into the other at the seams. You will see tracts of leafless beeches of a faint yellowish gray, and leafless oaks a little ruddier in the hue. Then zones of pine of a solemn green; and, dotted among the pines, or standing by themselves in rocky clearings, the delicate, snow-white trunks of birches, spreading out into snow-white branches yet more delicate, and crowned and canopied with a purple haze of twigs. And then a long, bare ridge of tumbled boulders, with bright sandbreaks between them, and wavering sandy roads among the bracken and brown heather. It is all rather cold and unhomely. It has not the perfect beauty, nor the gem-like coloring, of the wood in the later year, when it is no more than one vast colonnade of verdant shadow, tremulous with insects, intersected here and there by lanes of sunlight set in purple heather. The loveliness of the woods in March is not, assuredly, of this blowsy rustic type. It is made sharp with a grain of salt, with a touch of ugliness. It has a sting like the sting of bitter ale; you acquire the love of it as men acquire a taste for olives. And the wonderful clear, pure air wells into your lungs the while by voluptuous inhalations, and makes the eyes bright, and sets the heart tinkling to a new tune—or, rather, to an old tune; for you remember in your boyhood something akin to this spirit of adventure, this thirst for exploration, that now takes you masterfully by the hand, plunges you into many a deep grove, and drags you over many a stony crest. It is as if the whole wood were full of friendly voices calling you farther in, and you turn from one side to another, like Buridan's donkey, in a maze of pleasure.

Comely beeches send up their white, straight, clustered branches, barred with green moss, like so many fingers from a half-clenched hand. Mighty oaks stand to the ankles in a fine tracery of underwood; thence the tall shaft climbs upward, and the great forest of stalwart boughs spreads out into the golden evening sky, where the rooks are flying and calling. On the sward of the Bois d'Hyver the firs stand well asunder with outspread arms, like fencers saluting; and the air smells of resin all around, and the sound of the ax is rarely still. But strangest of all, and in appearance oldest of all, are the dim and wizard upland districts of young wood. The ground is carpeted with fir-tassel, and strewn with fir-apples and flakes of fallen bark. Rocks lie crouching in the thicket, guttered with rain, tufted with lichen, white with years and the rigors of the changeful seasons. Brown and yellow butterflies are sown and carried away again by the light air —like thistledown. The loneliness of these coverts is so excessive, that there are moments when pleasure draws to the verge of fear. You listen and listen for some noise to break the silence, till you grow half mesmerized by the intensity of the strain; your sense of your own identity is troubled; your brain reels, like that of some gymnosophist poring on his own nose in Asiatic jungles; and should you see your own outspread feet, you see them, not as anything of yours, but as a feature of the scene around you.

Still the forest is always, but the stillness is not always unbroken. You can hear the wind pass in the distance over the tree-tops; sometimes briefly, like the noise of a train; sometimes with a long steady rush, like the breaking of waves. And sometimes, close at hand, the branches move, a moan goes through the thicket, and the wood thrills to its heart. Perhaps you may hear a carriage on the road to Fontainebleau, a bird gives a dry continual chirp, the dead leaves rustle underfoot, or you may time your steps to the steady recurrent strokes of the woodman's ax. From time to time, over the low grounds, a flight of rooks goes by; and from time to time the cooing of wild doves falls upon the ear, not sweet and rich and near at hand as in England, but a sort of voice of the

woods, thin and far away, as fits these solemn places. Or you hear suddenly the hollow, eager, violent barking of dogs; scared deer flit past you through the fringes of the wood; then a man or two running, in green blouse, with gun and game-bag on a bandolier; and then, out of the thick of the trees, comes the jar of rifle-shots. Or perhaps the hounds are out, and horns are blown, and scarlet-coated huntsmen flash through the clearings, and the solid noise of horses galloping passes below you, where you sit perched among the rocks and heather. The boar is afoot; and all over the forest, and in all neighboring villages, there is a vague excitement and a vague hope; for who knows whither the chase may lead? and even to have seen a single piqueur, or spoken to a single sportsman, is to be a man of consequence for the night.

Besides men who shoot and men who ride with the hounds, there are few people in the forest, in the early spring, save wood-cutters plying their axes steadily, and old women and children gathering wood for the fire. You may meet such a party coming home in the twilight: the old woman laden with a fagot of chips, and the little ones hauling a long branch behind them in her wake. That is the worst of what there is to encounter; and if I tell you of what once happened to a friend of mine, it is by no means to tantalize you with false hopes; for the adventure was unique. It was on a very cold, still, sunless morning, with a flat gray sky and a frosty tingle in the air, that this friend (who shall here be nameless) heard the notes of a key-bugle played with much hesitation, and saw the smoke of a fire spread out along the green pine tops, in a remote uncanny glen, hard by a hill of naked boulders. He drew near warily, and beheld a picnic party seated under a tree in an open. The old father knitted a sock, the mother sat staring at the fire. The eldest son, in the uniform of a private of dragoons, was choosing out notes on a key-bugle. Two or three daughters lay in the neighborhood picking violets. And the whole party as grave and silent as the woods around them! My friend watched for a long time, he says; but all held their peace; not one spoke or smiled; only the dragoon kept choosing out sin-

gle notes upon the bugle, and the father knitted away at his work and made strange movements the while with his flexible eyebrows. They took no notice whatever of my friend's presence, which was disquieting in itself, and increased the resemblance of the whole party to mechanical waxworks. Certainly, he affirms, a wax figure might have played the bugle with more spirit than that strange dragoon. And as this hypothesis of his became more certain, the awful insolubility of why they should be left out there in the woods with nobody to wind them up again when they ran down, and a growing disquietude as to what might happen next, became too much for his courage, and he turned tail, and fairly took to his heels. It might have been a singing in his ears, but he fancies he was followed as he ran by a peal of Titanic laughter. Nothing has ever transpired to clear up the mystery; it may be they were automata; or it may be (and this is the theory to which I lean myself) that this is all another chapter of Heine's "Gods in exile"; that the upright old man with the eyebrows was no other than Father Jove, and the young dragoon with the taste for music either Apollo or Mars.

MORALITY

Strange indeed is the attraction of the forest for the minds of men. Not one or two only, but a great chorus of grateful voices have arisen to spread abroad its fame. Half the famous writers of modern France have had their word to say about Fontainebleau. Chateaubriand, Michelet, Béranger, George Sand, de Senancour, Flaubert, Murger, the brothers Goncourt, Théodore de Banville, each of these has done something to the eternal praise and memory of these woods. Even at the very worst of times, even when the picturesque was anathema in the eyes of all Persons of Taste, the forest still preserved a certain reputation for beauty. It was in 1730 that the Abbé Guilbert published his *Historical Description of the Palace, Town, and Forest of Fontainebleau*. And very droll it is to see him, as he tries to set forth his admiration in terms of what was then permissible. The monstrous rocks, etc., says the

Abbé, "sont admirées avec surprise des voyageurs qui s'écrient aussitôt avec Horace: Ut mihi devio rupes et vacuum nemus mirari libet." The good man is not exactly lyrical in his praise; and you see how he sets his back against Horace as against a trusty oak. Horace, at any rate, was classical. For the rest, however, the Abbé likes places where many alleys meet; or which, like the Belle-Etoile, are kept up "by a special gardener," and admires at the Table du Roi the labors of the Grand Master of Woods and Waters, the Sieur de la Falure, "qui a fait faire ce magnifique endroit."

But indeed, it is not so much for its beauty that the forest makes a claim upon men's hearts, as for that subtle something, that quality of the air, that emanation from the old trees, that so wonderfully changes and renews a weary spirit. Disappointed men, sick Francis Firsts and vanquished Grand Monarchs, time out of mind have come here for consolation. Hither perplexed folk have retired out of the press of life, as into a deep bay-window on some night of masquerade, and here found quiet and silence, and rest, the mother of wisdom. It is the great moral spa; this forest without a fountain is itself a great fountain of Juventius. It is the best place in the world to bring an old sorrow that has been a long while your friend and enemy; and if, like Béranger's, your gaiety has run away from home and left open the door for sorrow to come in, of all covers in Europe, it is here you may expect to find the truant hid. With every hour you change. The air penetrates through your clothes, and nestles to your living body. You love exercise and slumber, long fasting and full meals. You forget all your scruples and live a while in peace and freedom, and for the moment only. For here, all is absent that can stimulate to moral feeling. Such people as you see may be old, or toil-worn, or sorry; but you see them framed in the forest, like figures on a painted canvas; and for you, they are not people in any living and kindly sense. You forget the grim contrariety of interests. You forget the narrow lane where all men jostle together in unchivalrous contention, and the kennel, deep and unclean, that gapes on either

hand for the defeated. Life is simple enough, it seems, and the very idea of sacrifice becomes like a mad fancy out of a last night's dream.

Your ideal is not perhaps high, but it is plain and possible. You become enamored of a life of change and movement and the open air, where the muscles shall be more exercised than the affections. When you have had your will of the forest, you may visit the whole round world. You may buckle on your knapsack and take the road on foot. You may bestride a good nag, and ride forth, with a pair of saddle-bags, into the enchanted East. You may cross the Black Forest, and see Germany widespread before you, like a map, dotted with old cities, walled and spired, that dream all day on their own reflections in the Rhine or Danube. You may pass the spinal cord of Europe and go down from Alpine glaciers to where Italy extends her marble moles and glasses her marble palaces in the midland sea. You may sleep in the flying trains or wayside taverns. You may be awakened at dawn by the scream of the express or the small pipe of the robin in the hedge. For you the rain should allay the dust of the beaten road: the wind dry your clothes upon you as you walked. Autumn should hang out russet pears and purple grapes along the lane; inn after inn proffer you their cups of raw wine; river by river receive your body in the sultry noon. Wherever you went warm valleys and high trees and pleasant villages should compass you about; and light fellowships should take you by the arm, and walk with you an hour upon your way. You may see from afar off what it will come to in the end—the weather-beaten red-nosed vagabond, consumed by a fever of the feet, cut off from all near touch of human sympathy, a waif, an Ishmael, and an outcast. And yet it will seem well—and yet, in the air of the forest, this will seem the best—to break all the network bound about your feet by birth and old companionship and loyal love, and bear your shovelful of phosphates to and fro, in town and country, until the hour of the great dissolvent.

Or, perhaps, you will keep to the cover. For the forest is by itself, and forest life owns small kinship with life in

the dismal land of labor. Men are so far sophisticated that they can not take the world as it is given to them by the sight of their eyes. Not only what they see and hear, but what they know to be behind, enter into their notion of a place. If the sea, for instance, lie just across the hills, sea thoughts will come to them at intervals, and the tenor of their dreams from time to time will suffer a sea change. And so here, in this forest, a knowledge of its greatness is for much in the effect produced. You reckon up the miles that lie between you and intrusion. You may walk before you all day long, and not fear to touch the barrier of your Eden, or stumble out of fairy-land into the land of gin and steam-hammers. And there is an old tale enhances for the imagination the grandeur of the woods of France, and secures you in the thought of your seclusion. When Charles VI. hunted in the time of his wild boyhood near Senlis, there was captured an old stag, having a collar of bronze about his neck, and these words engraved on the collar: "Cæsar mihi hoc donavit." It is no wonder if the minds of men were moved at this occurrence and they stood aghast to find themselves thus touching hands with forgotten ages, and following an antiquity with hound and horn. And even for you, it is scarcely in an idle curiosity that you ponder how many centuries this stag had carried its free antlers through the wood, and how many summers and winters had shone and snowed on the imperial badge. If the extent of solemn wood could thus safeguard a tall stag from the hunters' hounds and horses, might not you also play hide-and-seek, in these groves, with all the pangs and trepidations of man's life, and elude Death, the mighty hunter, for more than the span of human years? Here, also, crash his arrows; here, in the farthest glade, sounds the gallop of the pale horse. But he does not hunt this cover with all his hounds, for the game is thin and small: and if you were but alert and wary, if you lodged ever in the deepest thickets, you too might live on into later generations and astonish men by your stalwart age and the trophies of an immemorial success.

For the forest takes away from you all excuse to die.

There is nothing here to cabin or thwart your free desires. Here all the impudences of the brawling world reach you no more. You may count your hours, like Endymion, by the strokes of the lone wood-cutter, or by the progression of the lights and shadows and the sun wheeling his wide circuit through the naked heavens. Here shall you see no enemies but winter and rough weather. And if a pang comes to you at all, it will be a pang of healthful hunger. All the puling sorrows, all the carking repentance, all this talk of duty that is no duty, in the great peace, in the pure daylight of these woods, fall away from you like a garment. And if perchance you come forth upon an eminence, where the wind blows upon you large and fresh, and the pines knock their long stems together, like an ungainly sort of puppets, and see far away over the plain a factory chimney defined against the pale horizon—it is for you, as for the staid and simple peasant when, with his plow, he upturns old arms and harness from the furrow of the glebe. Ay, sure enough, there was a battle there in the old times; and, sure enough, there is a world out yonder where men strive together with a noise of oaths and weeping and clamorous dispute. So much you apprehend by an athletic act of the imagination. A faint far-off rumor as of Merovingian wars; a legend as of some dead religion.

ON THE THERMAL INFLUENCE OF FORESTS[1]

THE opportunity of an experiment on a comparatively large scale, and under conditions of comparative isolation, can occur but rarely in such a science as Meteorology. Hence Mr. Milne Home's proposal for the plantation of Malta seemed to offer an exceptional opportunity for progress. Many of the conditions are favorable to the simplicity of the result; and it seemed natural that, if a searching and systematic series of observations were to be immediately set afoot, and continued during the course of the plantation and growth of the wood, some light would be thrown on the still doubtful question of the climatic influence of forests.

Mr. Milne Home expects, as I gather, a threefold result:—1st, an increased and better regulated supply of available water; 2nd, an increased rainfall; and 3rd, a more equable climate, with more temperate summer heat and winter cold.[2] As to the first of these expectations, I suppose there can be no doubt that it is justified by facts; but it may not be unnecessary to guard against any confusion of the first with the second. Not only does the presence of growing timber increase and regulate the supply of running and spring water independently of any change in the amount of rainfall, but as Boussingault found at Marmato,[3] denudation of forest is sufficient to decrease that supply, even when the rainfall has increased instead of diminished in amount. The second and third effects stand apart, therefore, from any question as to the utility of Mr. Milne Home's important proposal: they

[1] Read before the Royal Society, Edinburgh, 19th May, 1873.
[2] *Jour. Scot. Met. Soc.*, New Ser. xxvi. 35.
[3] Quoted by Mr. Milne Home.

are both, perhaps, worthy of discussion at the present time, but I wish to confine myself in the present paper to the examination of the third alone.

A wood, then, may be regarded either as a *superficies* or as a *solid;* that is either as a part of the earth's surface slightly elevated above the rest, or as a diffused and heterogeneous body displacing a certain portion of free and mobile atmosphere. It is primarily in the first character that it attracts our attention, as a radiating and absorbing surface, exposed to the sun and the currents of the air; such that, if we imagine a plateau of meadow-land or bare earth raised to the mean level of the forest's exposed leaf-surface, we shall have an agent entirely similar in kind, although perhaps widely differing in the amount of action. Now, by comparing a tract of wood with such a plateau as we have just supposed, we shall arrive at a clear idea of the specialties of the former. In the first place, then, the mass of foliage may be expected to increase the radiating power of each tree. The upper leaves radiate freely toward the stars and the cold interstellar spaces, while the lower ones radiate to those above and receive less heat in return; consequently, during the absence of the sun, each tree cools gradually downward from top to bottom. Hence we must take into account not merely the area of leaf-surface actually exposed to the sky, but, to a greater or less extent, the surface of every leaf in the whole tree or the whole wood. This is evidently a point in which the action of the forest may be expected to differ from that of the meadow or naked earth: for though, of course, inferior strata tend to a certain extent to follow somewhat the same course as the mass of inferior leaves, they do so to a less degree—conduction, and the conduction of a very slow conductor, being substituted for radiation.

We come next, however, to a second point of difference. In the case of the meadow, the chilled air continues to lie upon the surface, the grass, as Humboldt says, remaining all night submerged in the stratum of lowest temperature; while in the case of trees, the coldest air is continually passing down to the space underneath the boughs, or what we

may perhaps term the crypt of the forest. Here it is that the consideration of any piece of woodland conceived as a solid comes naturally in; for this solid contains a portion of the atmosphere, partially cut off from the rest, more or less excluded from the influence of wind, and lying upon a soil that is screened all day from isolation by the impending mass of foliage. In this way (and chiefly, I think, from the exclusion of winds), we have underneath the radiating leaf-surface a stratum of comparatively stagnant air, protected from many sudden variations of temperature, and tending only slowly to bring itself into equilibrium with the more general changes that take place in the free atmosphere.

Over and above what has been mentioned, thermal effects have been attributed to the vital activity of the leaves in the transudation of water, and even to the respiration and circulation of living wood. The whole actual amount of thermal influence, however, is so small that I may rest satisfied with mere mention. If these actions have any effect at all, it must be practically insensible; and the others that I have already stated are not only sufficient validly to account for all the observed differences, but would lead naturally to the expectation of differences very much larger and better marked. To these observations I proceed at once. Experience has been acquired upon the following three points:—1, The relation between the temperature of the trunk of a tree and the temperature of the surrounding atmosphere; 2, The relation btween the temperature of the air under a wood and the temperature of the air outside; and, 3, The relation between the temperature of the air above a wood and the temperature of the air above cleared land.

As to the first question, there are several independent series of observations; and I may remark in passing, what applies to all, that allowance must be made throughout for some factor of specific heat. The results were as follows:—The seasonal and monthly means in the tree and in the air were not sensibly different. The variations in the tree, in M. Becquerel's own observations, appear as considerably less than a fourth of those in the atmosphere,

and he has calculated, from observations made at Geneva, between 1796 and 1798, that the variations in the tree were less than a fifth of those in the air; but the tree in this case, besides being of a different species, was seven or eight inches thicker than the one experimented on by himself.[4] The variations in the tree, therefore, are always less than those in the air, the ratio between the two depending apparently on the thickness of the tree in question and the rapidity with which the variations followed upon one another. The times of the maxima, moreover, were widely different: in the air, the maximum occurs at 2 P. M. in winter, and at 3 P. M. in summer; in the tree, it occurs in winter at 6 P. M., and in summer between 10 and 11 P. M. At nine in the morning in the month of June, the temperatures of the tree and of the air had come to an equilibrium. A similar difference of progression is visible in the means, which differ most in spring and autumn, and tend to equalize themselves in winter and in summer. But it appears most strikingly in the case of variations somewhat longer in period than the daily ranges. The following temperatures occurred during M. Becquerel's observations in the Jardin des Plantes: —

Date	Temperature of the Air	Temperature in the Tree
1859. Dec. 15,	26.78°	32°
" 16,	19.76°	32°
" 17,	17.78°	31.46°
" 18,	13.28°	30.56°
" 19,	12.02°	28.40°
" 20,	12.54°	25.34°
" 21,	38.30°	27.86°
" 22,	43.34°	30.92°
" 23,	44.06°	31.46°

A moment's comparison of the two columns will make the principle apparent. The temperature of the air falls nearly fifteen degrees in five days; the temperature of the tree, sluggishly following, falls in the same time less than four degrees. Between the 19th and the 20th the temperature of the air has changed its direction of motion, and risen nearly a degree; but the temperature of

[4] *Atlas Météorlogique de l'Observatoire Impérial*, 1867.

the tree persists in its former course, and continues to fall nearly three degrees farther. On the 21st there comes a sudden increase of heat, a sudden thaw; the temperature of the air rises twenty-five and a half degrees; the change at last reaches the tree, but only raises its temperature by less than three degrees; and even two days afterward, when the air is already twelve degrees above freezing point, the tree is still half a degree below it. Take, again, the following case:—

Date	Temperature of the Air	Temperature in the Tree
1859. July 13,	84.92°	76.28°
" 14,	82.58°	78.62°
" 15,	80.42°	77.72°
" 16,	79.88°	78.44°
" 17,	73.22°	75.92°
" 18,	68.54°	74.30°
" 19,	65.66°	70.70°

The same order reappears. From the 13th to the 19th the temperature of the air steadily falls, while the temperature of the tree continues apparently to follow the course of previous variations, and does not really begin to fall, is not really affected by the ebb of heat, until the 17th, three days at least after it had been operating in the air.[5] Hence we may conclude that all variations of the temperature of the air, whatever be their period, from twenty-four hours up to twelve months, are followed in the same manner by variations in the temperature of the tree; and that those in the tree are always less in amount and considerably slower of occurrence than those in the air. This *thermal sluggishness,* so to speak, seems capable of explaining all the phenomena of the case without any hypothetical vital power of resisting temperatures below the freezing-point, such as is hinted at even by Becquerel.

Réaumur, indeed, is said to have observed temperatures in slender trees nearly thirty degrees higher than the temperature of the air in the sun; but we are not informed as to the conditions under which this observation was made, and it is therefore impossible to assign to it its

[5] *Comptes Rendus de l'Académie,* 29th March, 1869.

proper value. The sap of the ice-plant is said to be materially colder than the surrounding atmosphere; and there are several other somewhat incongruous facts, which tend, at first sight, to favor the view of some inherent power of resistance in some plants to high temperatures, and in others to low temperatures.[6] But such a supposition seems in the mean time to be gratuitous. Keeping in view the thermal redispositions, which must be greatly favored by the ascent of the sap, and the difference between the condition as to temperature of such parts as the root, the heart of the trunk, and the extreme foliage, and never forgetting the unknown factor of specific heat, we may still regard it as possible to account for all anomalies without the aid of any such hypothesis. We may, therefore, I think, disregard small exceptions, and state the result as follows:—

If, after every rise or fall, the temperature of the air remained stationary for a length of time proportional to the amount of the change, it seems probable—setting aside all question of vital heat—that the temperature of the tree would always finally equalize itself with the new temperature of the air, and that the range in tree and atmosphere would thus become the same. This pause, however, does not occur: the variations follow each other without interval; and the slow-conducting wood is never allowed enough time to overtake the rapid changes of the more sensitive air. Hence, so far as we can see at present, trees appear to be simply bad conductors, and to have no more influence upon the temperature of their surroundings than is fully accounted for by the consequent tardiness of their thermal variations. Observations bearing on the second of the three points have been made by Becquerel in France, by La Cour in Jutland and Iceland, and by Rivoli at Posen. The results are perfectly congruous. Becquerel's observations[7] were made under wood and about a hundred yards outside in open ground, at three stations in the district of Montargis, Loiret. There was a difference of more than one degree Fahrenheit between the mean an-

[6] Professor Balfour's *Class Book of Botany*, Physiology, chap. xii., p. 670.
[7] *Comptes Rendus*, 1867 and 1869.

nual temperatures in favor of the open ground. The mean summer temperature in the wood was from two to three degrees lower than the mean summer temperature outside. The mean maxima in the wood were also lower than those without by a little more than two degrees. Herr La Cour [8] found the daily range consistently smaller inside the wood than outside. As far as regards the mean winter temperatures, there is an excess in favor of the forest, but so trifling in amount as to be unworthy of much consideration. Libri found that the minimum winter temperatures were not sensibly lower at Florence, after the Apennines had been denuded of forest, than they had been before.[9] The disheartening contradictoriness of his observations on this subject led Herr Rivoli to the following ingenious and satisfactory comparison.[10] Arranging his results according to the wind that blew on the day of observation, he set against each other the variation of the temperature under wood from that without, and the variation of the temperature of the wind from the local mean for the month:—

Wind	N.	N. E.	E.	S. E.	S.	S. W.	W.	N. W.
Var. in Wood . .	+0·60	+0·26	+0·26	+0·04	−0·04	−0·20	+0·16	+0·07
Var. in Wind . .	−0·30	−2·60	−3·30	−1·20	+1·00	+1·30	−1·00	+1·00

From this curious comparison, it becomes apparent that the variations of the difference in question depend upon the amount of variations of temperature which take place in the free air, and on the slowness with which such changes are communicated to the stagnant atmosphere of woods; in other words, as Herr Rivoli boldly formulates it, a forest is simply a bad conductor. But this is precisely the same conclusion as we have already arrived at with regard to individual trees; and in Herr Rivoli's table, what we see is just another case of what we saw in M. Becquerel's—the different progression of temperatures. It must be obvious, however, that the thermal condition of a single tree must be different in many ways from that

[8] See his paper.

[9] *Annales de Chimie et de Physique,* xlv., 1830. A more detailed comparison of the climates in question would be a most interesting and important contribution to the subject.

[10] Reviewed in the *Austrian Meteorological Magazine,* vol. iv. p. 543.

of a combination of trees and more or less stagnant air, such as we call a forest. And accordingly we find, in the case of the latter, the following new feature: The mean yearly temperature of woods is lower than the mean yearly temperature of free air, while they are decidedly colder in summer, and very little, if at all, warmer in winter. Hence, on the whole, forests are colder than cleared lands. But this is just what might have been expected from the amount of evaporation, the continued descent of cold air, and its stagnation in the close and sunless crypt of a forest; and one can only wonder here, as elsewhere, that the resultant difference is so insignificant and doubtful.

We come now to the third point in question, the thermal influence of woods upon the air above them. It will be remembered that we have seen reason to believe their effect to be similar to that of certain other surfaces, except in so far as it may be altered, in the case of the forest, by the greater extent of effective radiating area, and by the possibility of generating a descending cold current as well as an ascending hot one. M. Becquerel is (so far as I can learn) the only observer who has taken up the elucidation of this subject. He placed his thermometers at three points:[11] A and B were both about seventy feet above the surface of the ground; but A was at the summit of a chestnut-tree, while B was in the free air, fifty feet away from the other. C was four or five feet above the ground, with a northern exposure; there was also a fourth station to the south, at the same level as this last, but its readings are very seldom referred to. After several years of observation, the mean temperature at A was found to be between one and two degrees higher than that at B. The order of progression of differences is as instructive here as in the two former investigations. The maximum difference in favor of station A occurred between three and five in the afternoon, later or sooner according as there had been more or less sunshine, and ranged sometimes as high as seven degrees. After this the difference kept declining until sunrise, when there was often a difference of a degree, or a degree and a half,

[11] *Comptes Rendus*, 28th May, 1860.

upon the other side. On cloudy days the difference tended to a minimum. During a rainy month of April, for example, the difference in favor of station A was less than half a degree; the first fifteen days of May following, however, were sunny, and the difference rose to more than a degree and a half.[12] It will be observed that I have omitted up to the present point all mention of station C. I do so because M. Becquerel's language leaves it doubtful whether the observations made at this station are logically comparable with those made at the other two. If the end in view were to compare the progression of temperatures above the earth, above a tree, and in free air, removed from all such radiative and absorptive influences, it is plain that all three should have been equally exposed to the sun or kept equally in shadow. As the observations were made, they give us no notion of the relative action of earth-surface and forest-surface upon the temperature of the contiguous atmosphere; and this, as it seems to me, was just the *crux* of the problem. So far, however, as they go, they seem to justify the view that all these actions are the same in kind, however they may differ in degree.

We find the forest heating the air during the day, and heating it more or less according as there has been more or less sunshine for it to absorb, and we find it also chilling it during the night; both of which are actions common to any radiating surface, and would be produced, if with differences of amount and time, by any other such surface raised to the mean level of the exposed foliage.

To recapitulate:

1st. We find that single trees appear to act simply as bad conductors.

2d. We find that woods, regarded as solids, are, on the whole, slightly lower in temperature than the free air which they have displaced, and that they tend slowly to adapt themselves to the various thermal changes that take place without them.

3d. We find forests regarded as surfaces acting like any other part of the earth's surface, probably with more or

[12] *Comptes Rendus*, 20th May, 1861.

less difference in amount and progression, which we still lack the information necessary to estimate.

All this done, I am afraid that there can be little doubt that the more general climatic investigations will be long and vexatious. Even in South America, with extremely favorable conditions, the result is far from being definite. Glancing over the table published by M. Becquerel in his book on climates, from the observations of Humboldt, Hall, Boussingault, and others, it becomes evident, I think, that nothing can be founded upon the comparisons therein instituted; that all reasoning, in the present state of our information, is premature and unreliable. Strong statements have certainly been made; and particular cases lend themselves to the formation of hasty judgments. "From the Bay of Cupica to the Gulf of Guayaquil," says M. Boussingault, "the country is covered with immense forests and traversed by numerous rivers; it rains there almost ceaselessly; and the mean temperature of this moist district scarcely reaches 78.8° F. . . . At Payta commence the sandy deserts of Priura and Sechura; to the constant humidity of Choco succeeds almost at once an extreme of dryness; and the mean temperature of the coast increases at the same time by 1.8° F."[13] Even in this selected favorable instance it might be argued that the part performed in the change by the presence or absence of forest was comparatively small; there seems to have been, at the same time, an entire change of soil; and, in our present ignorance, it would be difficult to say by how much this of itself is able to affect the climate. Moreover, it is possible that the humidity of the one district is due to other causes besides the presence of wood, or even that the presence of wood is itself only an effect of some more general difference or combination of differences. Be that as it may, however, we have only to look a little longer at the table before referred to, to see how little weight can be laid on such special instances. Let us take five stations, all in this very district of Choco. Hacquita is eight hundred and twenty feet above Novita, and their mean temperatures are the same. Alto de Mombu, again, is five

[13] Becquerel, *Climats*, p. 141.

hundred feet higher than Hacquita, and the mean temperature has here fallen nearly two degrees. Go up another five hundred feet to Tambo de la Orquita, and again we find no fall in the mean temperature. Go up some five hundred feet further to Chami, and there is a fall in the mean temperature of nearly six degrees. Such numbers are evidently quite untrustworthy; and hence we may judge how much confidence can be placed in any generalization from these South American mean temperatures.

The question is probably considered too simply—too much to the neglect of concurrent influences. Until we know, for example, somewhat more of the comparative radiant powers of different soils, we can not expect any very definite result. A change of temperature would certainly be effected by the plantation of such a marshy district as the Sologne, because, if nothing else were done, the roots might pierce the impenetrable subsoil, allow the surface-water to drain itself off, and thus dry the country. But might not the change be quite different if the soil planted were a shifting sand, which, *fixed* by the roots of the trees, would become gradually covered with a vegetable earth, and thus be changed from dry to wet? Again, the complication, and conflict of effects arises, not only from the soil, vegetation, and geographical position of the place of the experiment itself, but from the distribution of similar or different conditions in its immediate neighborhood, and probably to great distances on every side. A forest, for example, as we know from Herr Rivoli's comparison, would exercise a perfectly different influence in a cold country subject to warm winds, and in a warm country subject to cold winds; so that our question might meet with different solutions even on the east and west coasts of Great Britain.

The consideration of such a complexity points more and more to the plantation of Malta as an occasion of special importance; its insular position and the unity of its geological structure both tend to simplify the question. There are certain points about the existing climate, moreover, which seem specially calculated to throw the influence of woods into a strong relief. Thus, during four summer

months, there is practically no rainfall. Thus, again, the northerly winds when stormy, and especially in winter, tend to depress the temperature very suddenly; and thus, too, the southerly and southwesterly winds, which raise the temperature during their prevalence to from eighty-eight to ninety-eight degrees, seldom last longer than a few hours; insomuch that "their disagreeable heat and dryness may be escaped by carefully closing the windows and doors of apartments at their onset." [14] Such sudden and short variations seem just what is wanted to accentuate the differences in question. Accordingly, the opportunity seems one not lightly to be lost, and the British Association or this society itself might take the matter up and establish a series of observations, to be continued during the next few years. Such a combination of favorable circumstances may not occur again for years; and when the whole subject is at a standstill for want of facts, the present occasion ought not to go past unimproved.

Such observations might include the following:

The observation of maximum and minimum thermometers in three different classes of situation—*videlicet,* in the areas selected for plantation themselves, at places in the immediate neighborhood of those areas where the external influence might be expected to reach its maximum, and at places distant from those areas where the influence might be expected to be least.

The observation of rain-gages and hygrometers at the same three descriptions of locality.

In addition to the ordinary hours of observation, special readings of the thermometers should be made as often as possible at a change of wind and throughout the course of the short hot breezes alluded to already, in order to admit of the recognition and extension of Herr Rivoli's comparison.

Observation of the periods and forces of the land and sea breezes.

Gaging of the principal springs, both in the neighborhood of the areas of plantation and at places far removed from those areas.

1873.

[14] Scoresby-Jackson's *Medical Climatology.*

HEALTH AND MOUNTAINS

THERE has come a change in medical opinion, and a change has followed in the lives of sick folk. A year or two ago and the wounded soldiery of mankind were all shut up together in some basking angle of the Riviera, walking a dusty promenade or sitting in dusty olive-yards within earshot of the interminable and unchanging surf—idle among spiritless idlers; not perhaps dying; yet hardly living either; and aspiring, sometimes fiercely, after livelier weather and some vivifying change. These were certainly beautiful places to live in, and the climate was wooing in its softness. Yet there was a latent shiver in the sunshine; you were not certain whether you were being wooed; and these mild shores would sometimes seem to you to be the shores of death. There was a lack of a manly element; the air was not reactive; you might write bits of poetry and practise resignation, but you did not feel that here was a good spot to repair your tissue or regain your nerve. And it appears, after all, that there was something just in these appreciations. The invalid is now asked to lodge on wintry Alps; a ruder air shall medicine him; the demon of cold is no longer to be fled from, but bearded in his den. For even Winter has his "dear domestic cave," and in those places where he may be said to dwell for ever tempers his austerities.

Any one who has traveled westward by the great transcontinental railroad of America must remember the joy with which he perceived, after the tedious prairies of Nebraska and across the vast and dismal moorlands of Wyoming, a few snowy mountain summits along the southern sky. It is among these mountains, in the new State of Colorado, that the sick man may find, not merely an alle-

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viation of his ailments, but the possibility of an active life and an honest livelihood. There, no longer as a lounger in a plaid, but as a working farmer, sweating at his work, he may prolong and begin anew his life. Instead of the bath-chair, the spade; instead of the regulated walk, rough journeys in the forest; and the pure, rare air of the open mountain for the miasma of the sick-room—there are the changes offered him, with what promise of pleasure and of self-respect, with what a revolution in all his hopes and terrors, none but an invalid can know. Resignation, the cowardice that apes a kind of courage and that lives in the very air of health resorts, is cast aside at a breath of such a prospect. The man can open the door; he can be up and doing; he can be a kind of a man after all and not merely an invalid.

But it is a far cry to the Rocky Mountains. We can not all of us go farming in Colorado; and there is yet a middle term, which combines the medical benefits of the new system with the moral drawbacks of the old. Again the invalid has to lie aside from life and its wholesome duties; again he has to be an idler among idlers; but this time at a great altitude, far among mountains, with the snow piled before his door and the frost-flowers every morning on his window. The mere fact is tonic to his nerves. His choice of a place of wintering has somehow to his own eyes the air of an act of bold conduct; and, since he has wilfully sought low temperatures, he is not so apt to shudder at a touch of chill. He came for that, he looked for it, and he throws it from him with the thought.

A long straight reach of valley, wall-like mountains upon either hand that rise higher and shoot up new summits the higher you climb; a few noble peaks seen even from the valley; a village of hotels; a world of black and white—black pine woods clinging to the sides of the valley, and white snow flouring it, and papering it between the pine woods, and covering all the mountains with a dazzling curd; add a few score invalids marching to and fro upon the snowy road, or skating on the ice-rinks, possibly to music, or sitting under sunshades by the door of the hotel

—and you have the larger features of a mountain sanatorium. A certain furious river runs curving down the valley; its pace never varies, it has not a pool for as far as you can follow it; and its unchanging, senseless hurry is strangely tedious to witness. It is a river that a man could grow to hate. Day after day breaks with the rarest gold upon the mountain spires, and creeps, growing and glowing, down into the valley. From end to end the snow reverberates the sunshine; from end to end the air tingles with the light, clear and dry like crystal. Only along the course of the river, but high above it, there hangs far into the noon one waving scarf of vapor. It were hard to fancy a more engaging feature in a landscape; perhaps it is harder to believe that delicate, long-lasting phantom of the atmosphere a creature of the incontinent stream whose course it follows. By noon the sky is arrayed in an unrivaled pomp of color—mild and pale and melting in the north, but toward the zenith dark with an intensity of purple blue. What with this darkness of heaven and the intolerable luster of the snow, space is reduced again to chaos. An English painter, coming to France late in life, declared with natural anger that "the values were all wrong." Had he got among the Alps on a bright day he might have lost his reason. And even to any one who has looked at landscape with any care, and in any way through the spectacles of representative art, the scene has a character of insanity. The distant shining mountain peak is here beside your eye; the neighboring dull-colored house in comparison is miles away; the summit, which is all of splendid snow, is close at hand; the nigh slopes, which are black with pine trees, bear it no relation, and might be in another sphere. Here there are none of those delicate gradations, those intimate, misty joinings-on and spreadings-out into the distance, nothing of that art of air and light by which the face of nature explains and veils itself in climes which we may be allowed to think more lovely. A glaring piece of crudity, where everything that is not white is a solecism and defies the judgment of the eyesight; a scene of blinding definition; a parade of daylight, almost scenically vulgar, more than scenically trying, and

yet hearty and healthy, making the nerves to tighten and the mouth to smile: such is the winter daytime in the Alps. With the approach of evening all is changed. A mountain will suddenly intercept the sun; a shadow fall upon the valley; in ten minutes the thermometer will drop as many degrees; the peaks that are no longer shone upon dwindle into ghosts; and meanwhile, overhead, if the weather be rightly characteristic of the place, the sky fades toward night through a surprising key of colors. The latest gold leaps from the last mountain. Soon, perhaps, the moon shall rise, and in her gentler light the valley shall be mellowed and misted, with here and there a wisp of silver cloud upon a hilltop, and here and there a warmly glowing window in a house, between fire and starlight, kind and homely in the fields of snow.

But the valley is not seated so high among the clouds to be eternally exempt from changes. The clouds gather, black as ink; the wind bursts rudely in; day after day the mists drive overhead, the snow-flakes flutter down in blinding disarray; daily the mail comes in later from the top of the pass; people peer through their windows and foresee no end but an entire seclusion from Europe and death by gradual dry-rot, each in his indifferent inn; and when at last the storm goes, and the sun comes again, behold a world of unpolluted snow, glossy like fur, bright like daylight, a joy to wallowing dogs and cheerful to the souls of men. Or perhaps, from across storied and malarious Italy, a wind cunningly winds about the mountains and breaks, warm and unclean, upon our mountain valley. Every nerve is set a jar; the conscience recognizes, at a gust, a load of sins and negligences hitherto unknown; and the whole invalid world huddles into its private chambers, and silently recognizes the empire of the *Fohn*.

DAVOS IN WINTER

A MOUNTAIN valley has, at the best, a certain prison-like effect on the imagination; but a mountain valley, an Alpine winter, and an invalid's weakness make up among them a prison of the most effective kind. The roads indeed are cleared, and at least one footpath dodging up the hill; but to these the health-seeker is rigidly confined. There are for him no cross-cuts over the field, no following of streams, no unguiding rambles in the wood. His walks are cut and dry. In five or six different directions he can push as far, and no farther, than his strength permits; never deviating from the line laid down for him and beholding at each repetition the same field of wood and snow from the same corner of the road. This, of itself, would be a little trying to the patience in the course of months; but to this is added, by the heaped mantle of the snow, an almost utter absence of detail and an almost unbroken identity of color. Snow, it is true, is not merely white. The sun touches it with roseate and golden lights. Its own crushed infinity of crystals, its own richness of tiny sculpture, fills it, when regarded near at hand, with wonderful depths of colored shadow, and, though wintrily transformed, it is still water, and has watery tones of blue. But, when all is said, these fields of white and blots of crude black forest are but a trite and staring substitute for the infinite variety and pleasantness of the earth's face. Even a boulder, whose front is too precipitous to have retained the snow, seems, if you come upon it in your walk, a perfect gem of color, reminds you almost painfully of other places, and brings into your head the delights of more Arcadian days—the path across the meadow, the hazel dell, the lilies on the

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stream, and the scents, the colors, and the whisper of the woods. And scents here are as rare as colors. Unless you get a gust of kitchen in passing some hotel, you shall smell nothing all day long but the faint and choking odor of frost. Sounds, too, are absent; not a bird pipes, not a bough waves, in the dead, windless atmosphere. If a sleigh goes by, the sleigh-bells ring, and that is all; you work all winter through to no other accompaniment but the cronching of your steps upon the frozen snow.

It is the curse of Alpine valleys to be each one village from one end to the other. Go where you please, houses will still be in sight, before and behind you, and to the right and left. Climb as high as an invalid is able, and it is only to spy new habitations nested in the wood. Nor is that all; for about the health resort the walks are besieged by single people walking rapidly with plaids about their shoulders, by sudden troops of German boys trying to learn to *jodel,* and by German couples silently and, as you venture to fancy, not quite happily, pursuing love's young dream. You may perhaps be an invalid who likes to make bad verses as he walks abroad. Alas! no muse will suffer this imminence of interruption—and at the second stampede of jodelers you find your modest inspiration fled. Or you may only have a taste for solitude: it may try your nerves to have some one always in front whom you are visibly overtaking, and some one always behind who is audibly overtaking you, to say nothing of a score or so who brush past you in an opposite direction. It may annoy you to take your walks and seats in public view. Alas! there is no help for it among the Alps. There are no recesses, as in Gorbio Valley by the oil-mill; no sacred solitude of olive gardens as on the Roccabruna-road; no nook as upon Saint Martin's Cape, haunted by the voice of breakers, and fragrant with the threefold sweetness of the rosemary and the sea-pines and the sea.

For this publicity there is no cure and no alleviation; but the storms, of which you will complain so bitterly while they endure, checker and by their contrast brighten the sameness of fair-weather scenes. When sun and

storm contend together—when the thick clouds are broken up and pierced by arrows of golden daylight—there will be startling rearrangements and transfigurations of the mountain summits. A sun dazzling spire of alps hangs suspended in mid-sky among awful glooms and blackness; or perhaps the edge of some great mountain shoulder will be designed in living gold, and appear for the duration of a glance bright like a constellation, and alone "in the unapparent." You may think you know the figure on these hills; but when they are thus revealed, they belong no longer to the things of earth—meteors we should rather call them, appearances of sun and air that endure but for a moment and return no more. Other variations are more lasting, as when, for instance, heavy and wet snow has fallen through some windless hours, and the thin, spiry, mountain pine trees stand each stock still and loaded with a shining burden. You may drive through a forest so disguised, the tongue-tied torrent struggling silently in the cleft of the ravine, and all still except the jingle of the sleigh-bells, and you shall fancy yourself in some untrodden northern territory—Lapland, Labrador, or Alaska.

Or, possibly, you arise very early in the morning; totter downstairs in a state of somnambulism; take the simulacrum of a meal by the glimmer of one lamp in the deserted coffee-room; and find yourself by seven o'clock outside in a belated moonlight and a freezing chill. The mail-sleigh takes you up and carries you on, and you reach the top of the ascent in the first hour of the day. To trace the fires of the sunrise as they pass from peak to peak, to see the unlit treetops stand out soberly against the lighted sky, to be for twenty minutes in a wonderland of clear, fading shadows, disappearing vapors, solemn blooms of dawn, hills half-glorified already with the day and still half-confounded with the grayness of the western heaven —these will seem to repay you for the discomforts of that early start; but as the hour proceeds, and these enchantments vanish, you will find yourself upon the further side in yet another Alpine valley, snow-white and coal-black, with such another long-drawn congeries of hamlets and

such another senseless watercourse bickering along the foot. You have had your moment; but you have not changed the scene. The mountains are about you like a trap; you can not foot it up a hillside and behold the sea as a great plain, but live in holes and corners, and can change only one for another.

ALPINE DIVERSIONS

THERE will be no lack of diversion in an Alpine sanitarium. The place is half Englished to be sure, the local sheet appearing in double column, text and translation; but it still remains half German; and hence we have a band which is able to play, and a company of actors able, as you will be told, to act. This last you will take on trust, for the players, unlike the local sheet, confine themselves to German; and though at the beginning of winter they come with their wig-boxes to each hotel in turn, long before Christmas they will have given up the English for a bad job. There will follow, perhaps, a skirmish between the two races; the German element seeking, in the interest of their actors, to raise a mysterious item, the *Kur-taxe,* which figures heavily enough already in the weekly bills, the English element stoutly resisting. Meantime, in the English hotels home-played farces, *tableaux-vivants,* and even balls enliven the evenings; a charity bazaar sheds genial consternation; Christmas and New Year are solemnized with Pantagruelian dinners, and from time to time the young folks carol and revolve untunefully enough through the figures of a singing quadrille. A magazine club supplies you with everything, from the *Quarterly* to the *Sunday at Home.* Grand tournaments are organized at chess, drafts, billiards, and whist. Once and again wandering artists drop into our mountain valley, coming you know not whence, going you can not imagine whither, and belonging to every degree in the hierarchy of musical art, from the recognized performer who announces a concert for the evening, to the comic German family or solitary long-haired German baritone who surprises the guests

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at dinner-time with songs and a collection. They are all of them good to see; they, at least, are moving; they bring with them the sentiment of the open road; yesterday, perhaps, they were in Tyrol, and next week they will be far in Lombardy, while all we sick folk still simmer in our mountain prison. Some of them, too, are welcome as the flowers in May for their own sake; some of them may have a human voice; some may have that magic which transforms a wooden box into a songbird, and what we jeeringly call a fiddle into what we mention with respect as a violin. From that grinding lilt, with which the blind man, seeking pence, accompanies the beat of paddle wheels across the ferry, there is surely a difference rather of kind than of degree to that unearthly voice of singing that bewails and praises the destiny of man at the touch of the true virtuoso. Even that you may perhaps enjoy; and if do so, you will own it impossible to enjoy it more keenly than here, "im Schnee der Alpen." A hyacinth in a pot, a handful of primroses packed in moss, or a piece of music by some one who knows the way to the heart of a violin, bare things that, in this invariable sameness of the snows and frosty air, surprise you like an adventure. It is droll, moreover, to compare the respect with which the invalids attend a concert, and the ready contempt with which they greet the dinner-time performers. Singing which they would hear with real enthusiasm—possibly with tears—from a corner of a drawing-room, is listened to with laughter when it is offered by an unknown professional and no money has been taken at the door.

Of skating little need be said; in so snowy a climate the rinks must be intelligently managed; their mismanagement will lead to many days of vexation and some petty quarreling; but when all goes well, it is certainly curious, and perhaps rather unsafe, for the invalid to skate under a burning sun and walk back to his hotel in a sweat, through long tracts of glare and passages of freezing shadow. But the peculiar outdoor sport of this district is tobogganing. A Scotchman may remember the low flat board, with the front wheels on a pivot, which was called

a "hurlie"; he may remember this contrivance, laden with boys, as, laboriously started, it ran rattling down the brae, and was, now successfully, now unsuccessfully, steered round the corner at the foot; he may remember scented summer evenings passed in this diversion, and many a grazed skin, bloody cockscomb, and neglected lesson. The toboggan is to the hurlie what the sled is to the carriage; it is a hurlie upon runners; and if for a grating road you substitute a long declivity of beaten snow you can imagine the giddy career of the tobogganist. The correct position is to sit; but the fantastic will sometimes sit, hindforemost, or dare the descent upon their belly or their back. A few steer with a pair of pointed sticks, but it is more classical to use the feet. If the weight be heavy and the track smooth the toboggan takes the bit between its teeth; and to steer a couple of full-sized friends in safety requires not only judgment but desperate exertion. On a very steep track, with a keen evening frost, you may have moments almost too appalling to be called enjoyment; the head goes, the world vanishes; your blind steed bounds below your weight; you reach the foot, with all the breath knocked out of your body, jarred and bewildered as though you just had been subjected to a railway accident. Another element of joyful horror is added by the formation of a train; one toboggan being tied to another, perhaps to the number of half a dozen, only the first rider being allowed to steer, and all the rest pledged to put up their feet and follow their leader, with heart in mouth, down the made descent. This, particularly if the track begins with a headlong plunge, is one of the most exhilarating follies in the world, and the tobogganing invalid is early reconciled to somersaults.

There is all manner of variety in the nature of the tracks, some miles in length, others but a few yards, and yet, like some short rivers, furious in their brevity. All degrees of skill and courage and taste may be suited in your neighborhood. But perhaps the true way to toboggan is alone and at night. First comes the tedious climb, dragging your instrument behind you. Next a long breathing space, alone with snow and pine woods,

cold, silent, and solemn to the heart. Then you push off; the toboggan fetches way; she begins to feel the hill, to glide, to swim, to gallop. In a breath you are out from under the pine trees, and a whole heavenful of stars reels and flashes overhead. Then comes a vicious effort; for by this time your wooden steed is speeding like the wind, and you are spinning round a corner, and the whole glittering valley and all the lights in all the great hotels lie for a moment at your feet; and the next you are racing once more in the shadow of the night, with close-shut teeth and beating heart. Yet a little while and you will be landed on the highroad by the door of your own hotel. This, in an atmosphere tingling with forty degrees of frost, in a night made luminous with stars and snow, and girt with strange white mountains, teaches the pulse an unaccustomed tune and adds a new excitement to the life of man upon his planet.

ROADS

NO AMATEUR will deny that he can find more pleasure in a single drawing, over which he can sit a whole quiet forenoon, and so gradually study himself into humor with the artist, than he can ever extract from the dazzle and accumulation of incongruous impressions that sends him, weary and stupefied, out of some famous picture-gallery. But what is thus admitted with regard to art is not extended to the (so-called) natural beauties: no amount of excess in sublime mountain outline or the graces of cultivated lowland can do anything, it is supposed, to weaken or degrade the palate. We are not all sure, however, that moderation, and a regimen tolerably austere, even in scenery, are not healthful and strengthening to the taste; and that the best school for a lover of nature is not to be found in one of those countries where there is no stage effect—nothing salient or sudden—but a quiet spirit of orderly and harmonious beauty pervades all the details, so that we can patiently attend to each of the little touches that strike in us, all of them together, the subdued note of the landscape. It is in scenery such as this that we find ourselves in the right temper to seek out small sequestered loveliness. The constant recurrence of similar combinations of color and outline gradually forces upon us a sense of how the harmony has been built up, and we become familiar with something of nature's mannerism. This is the true pleasure of your "rural voluptuary,"—not to remain awe-stricken before a Mount Chimborazo; not to sit deafened over the big drum in the orchestra, but day by day to teach himself some new beauty—to experience some new, vague, and tranquil sensation that has before evaded him.

It is not the people who "have pined and hungered after nature many a year, in the great city pent," as Coleridge said in the poem that made Charles Lamb so much ashamed of himself; it is not those who make the greatest progress in this intimacy with her, or who are most quick to see and have the greatest gusto to enjoy. In this, as in everything else, it is minute knowledge and long-continued loving industry that make the true dilettante. A man must have thought much over scenery before he begins fully to enjoy it. It is no youngling enthusiasm on hilltops that can possess itself of the last essence of beauty.

Probably most people's heads are growing bare before they can see all in a landscape that they have the capability of seeing; and, even then, it will be only for one little moment of consummation before the faculties are again on the decline, and they that look out of the windows begin to be darkened and restrained in sight. Thus the study of nature should be carried forward thoroughly and with system. Every gratification should be rolled long under the tongue, and we should be always eager to analyze and compare, in order that we may be able to give some plausible reason for our admirations. True, it is difficult to put even approximately into words the kind of feelings thus called into play. There is a dangerous vice inherent in any such intellectual refining upon vague sensation. The analysis of such satisfaction lends itself very readily to literary affectations; and we can all think of instances where it has shown itself apt to exercise a morbid influence, even upon an author's choice of language and the turn of his sentences. And yet there is much that makes the attempt attractive; for any expression, however imperfect, once given to a cherished feeling, seems a sort of legitimation of the pleasure we take in it. A common sentiment is one of those great goods that make life palatable and ever new. The knowledge that another has felt as we have felt, and seen things, even if they are little things, not much otherwise than we have seen them, will continue to the end to be one of life's choicest pleasures.

Let the reader, then, betake himself in the spirit we have recommended to some of the quieter kinds of English landscape. In those homely and placid agricultural districts, familiarity will bring into relief many things worthy of notice, and urge them pleasantly home to him by a sort of loving repetition; such as the wonderful life-giving speed of windmill sails above the stationary country; the occurrence and recurrence of the same church tower at the end of one long vista after another: and, conspicuous among these sources of quiet pleasure, the character and variety of the road itself along which he takes his way. Not only near at hand, in the lithe contortions with which it adapts itself to the interchanges of level and slope, but far away also, when he sees a few hundred feet of it upheaved against a hill and shining in the afternoon sun, he will find it an object so changeful and enlivening that he can always pleasurably busy his mind about it. He may leave the river-side, or fall out of the way of villages, but the road he has always with him; and, in the true humor of observation, will find in that sufficient company.

From its subtle windings and changes of level there arises a keen and continuous interest, that keeps the attention ever alert and cheerful. Every sensitive adjustment to the contour of the ground, every little dip and swerve, seems instinct with life and an exquisite sense of balance and beauty. The road rolls upon the easy slopes of the country, like a long ship in the hollows of the sea. The very margins of waste ground, as they trench a little farther on the beaten way, or recede again to the shelter of the hedge, have something of the same free delicacy of line—of the same swing and wilfulness. You might think for a whole summer's day (and not have thought it any nearer an end by evening) what concourse and succession of circumstances has produced the least of these deflections; and it is, perhaps, just in this that we should look for the secret of their interest. A footpath across a meadow—in all its human waywardness and unaccountability, in all the *grata protervitas* of its varying direction—will always be more to us than a railroad well

engineered through a difficult country.[1] No reasoned sequence is thrust upon our attention: we seem to have slipped for one lawless little moment out of the iron rule of cause and effect; and so we revert at once to some of the pleasant old heresies of personification, always poetically orthodox, and attribute a sort of free will, an active and spontaneous life, to the white riband of road that lengthens out, and bends, and cunningly adapts itself to the inequalities of the land before our eyes. We remember, as we write, some miles of fine wide highway laid out with conscious esthetic artifice through a broken and richly cultivated tract of country. It is said that the engineer had Hogarth's line of beauty in his mind as he laid them down. And the result is striking. One splendid satisfying sweep passes with easy transition into another, and there is nothing to trouble or dislocate the strong continuousness of the main line of the road. And yet there is something wanting. There is here no saving imperfection, none of those secondary curves and little trepidations of direction that carry, in natural roads, our curiosity actively along with them. One feels at once that this road has not grown like a natural road, but has been laboriously made to pattern; and that, while a model may be academically correct in outline, it will always be inanimate and cold. The traveler is also aware of a sympathy of mood between himself and the road he travels. We have all seen ways that have wandered into heavy sand near the sea-coast, and trail wearily over the dunes like a trodden serpent: here we too must plod forward at a dull, laborious pace; and so a sympathy is preserved between our frame of mind and the expression of the relaxed, heavy curves of the roadway. Such a phenomenon, indeed, our reason might perhaps resolve with a little trouble. We might reflect that the present road had been developed out of a track spontaneously followed by generations of primitive wayfarers; and might see in its expression a testimony that those generations had been affected at the

[1] Compare Blake, in the "Marriage of Heaven and Hell": "Improvement makes straight roads; but the crooked roads, without improvement, are roads of Genius."

same ground, one after another, in the same manner as we are affected to-day. Or we might carry the reflection further, and remind ourselves that where the air is invigorating and the ground firm under the traveler's foot, his eye is quick to take advantage of small undulations, and he will turn carelessly aside from the direct way wherever there is anything beautiful to examine or some promise of a wider view; so that even a bush of wild roses may permanently bias and deform the straight path over the meadow; whereas, where the soil is heavy, one is preoccupied with the labor of mere progression, and goes with a bowed head heavily and unobservantly forward. Reason, however, will not carry us the whole way; for the sentiment often recurs in situations where it is very hard to imagine any possible explanation; and indeed, if we drive briskly along a good, well-made road in an open vehicle, we shall experience this sympathy almost at its fullest. We feel the sharp settle of the springs at some curiously twisted corner; after a steep ascent, the fresh air dances in our faces as we rattle precipitately down the other side, and we find it difficult to avoid attributing something headlong, a sort of *abandon,* to the road itself.

The mere winding of the path is enough to enliven a long day's walk in even a commonplace or dreary countryside. Something that we have seen from miles back, upon an eminence, is so long hid from us, as we wander through folded valleys or among woods, that our expectation of seeing it again is sharpened into a violent appetite, and as we draw nearer we impatiently quicken our steps and turn every corner with a beating heart. It is through these prolongations of expectancy, this succession of one hope to another, that we live out long seasons of pleasure in a few hours' walk. It is in following these capricious sinuosities that we learn only bit by bit and through one coquettish reticence after another, much as we learn the heart of a friend, the whole loveliness of the country. This disposition always preserves something new to be seen, and takes us, like a careful cicerone, to many different points of distant view before it allows us finally to approach the hoped-for destination.

In its connection with the traffic, and whole friendly intercourse with the country, there is something very pleasant in that succession of saunterers and brisk and business-like passers-by, that peoples our ways and helps to build up what Walt Whitman calls "the cheerful voice of the public road, the gay, fresh sentiment of the road." But out of the great network of ways that binds all life together from the hill-farm to the city, there is something individual to most, and, on the whole, nearly as much choice on the score of company as on the score of beauty or easy travel. On some we are never long without the sound of wheels, and folk pass us by so thickly that we lose the sense of their number. But on others, about little-frequented districts, a meeting is an affair of moment; we have the sight far off of some one coming toward us, the growing definiteness of the person, and then the brief passage and salutation, and the road left empty in front of us for perhaps a great while to come. Such encounters have a wistful interest that can hardly be understood by the dweller in places more populous. We remember standing beside a countryman once, in the mouth of a quiet by-street in a city that was more than ordinarily crowded and bustling; he seemed stunned and bewildered by the continual passage of different faces; and after a long pause, during which he appeared to search for some suitable expression, he said timidly that there seemed to be a *great deal of meeting thereabouts.* The phrase is significant. It is the expression of town-life in the language of the long, solitary country highways. A meeting of one with one was what this man had been used to in the pastoral uplands from which he came; and the concourse of the streets was in his eyes only an extraordinary multiplication of such "meetings."

And now we come to that last and most subtle quality of all, to that sense of prospect, of outlook, that is brought so powerfully to our minds by a road. In real nature as well as in old landscapes, beneath that impartial daylight in which a whole variegated plain is plunged and saturated, the line of the road leads the eye forth with the vague sense of desire up to the green limit of the

horizon. Travel is brought home to us, and we visit in spirit every grove and hamlet that tempts us in the distance. *Sehnsucht*—the passion for what is ever beyond—is livingly expressed in that white riband of possible travel that severs the uneven country; not a plowman following his plow up the shining furrow, not the blue smoke of any cottage in a hollow, but is brought to us with a sense of nearness and attainability by this wavering line of junction. There is a passionate paragraph in Werther that strikes the very key. "When I came hither," he writes, "how the beautiful valley invited me on every side, as I gazed down into it from the hilltop! There the wood—ah, that I might mingle in its shadows! there the mountain summits—ah, that I might look down from them over the broad country! the interlinked hills! the secret valleys! Oh, to lose myself among their mysteries! I hurried into the midst, and came back without finding aught I hoped for. Alas! the distance is like the future. A vast whole lies in the twilight before our spirit; sight and feeling alike plunge and lose themselves in the prospect, and we yearn to surrender our whole being, and let it be filled with all the rapture of one single glorious sensation; and alas! when we hasten to the fruition, when *there* is changed to *here,* all is afterward as it was before, and we stand in our indigent and cramped estate, and our soul thirsts after a still ebbing elixir." It is to this wandering and uneasy spirit of anticipation that roads minister. Every little vista, every little glimpse that we have of what lies before us, gives the impatient imagination rein, so that it can outstrip the body and already plunge into the shadows of the woods, and overlook from the hilltop the plain beyond it, and wander in the windings of the valleys that are still far in front. The road is already there—we shall not be long behind. It is as if we were marching with the rear of the great army, and, from far before, heard the acclamation of the people as the vanguard entered some friendly and jubilant city. Would not every man, through all the long miles of marching, feel as if he also were within the gates?

(Signed) L. S. Stoneven.

ON THE ENJOYMENT OF UNPLEASANT PLACES

IT IS a difficult matter to make the most of any given place, and we have much in our own power. Things looked at patiently from one side after another generally end by showing a side that is beautiful. A few months ago some words were said in the *Portfolio* as to an "austere regimen in scenery"; and such a discipline was then recommended as "healthful and strengthening to the taste." That is the text, so to speak, of the present essay. This discipline in scenery, it must be understood, is something more than a mere walk before breakfast to whet the appetite. For when we are put down in some unsightly neighborhood, and especially if we have come to be more or less dependent on what we see, we must set ourselves to hunt out beautiful things with all the ardor and patience of a botanist after a rare plant. Day by day we perfect ourselves in the art of seeing nature more favorably. We learn to live with her, as people learn to live with fretful or violent spouses: to dwell lovingly on what is good, and shut our eyes against all that is bleak or inharmonious. We learn, also, to come to each place in the right spirit. The traveler, as Brantôme quaintly tells us, *"fait des discours en soi pour se soutenir en chemin";* and into these discourses he weaves something out of all that he sees and suffers by the way: they take their tone greatly from the varying character of the scene; a sharp ascent brings different thoughts from a level road; and the man's fancies grow lighter as he comes out of the wood into a clearing. Nor does the scenery any more affect the thoughts than the thoughts affect the scenery. We see places through

our humors as through differently colored glasses. We are ourselves a term in the equation, a note of the chord, and make discord or harmony almost at will. There is no fear for the result, if we can but surrender ourselves sufficiently to the country that surrounds and follows us, so that we are ever thinking suitable thoughts or telling ourselves some suitable sort of story as we go. We become thus, in some sense, a center of beauty; we are provocative of beauty, much as a gentle and sincere character is provocative of sincerity and gentleness in others. And even where there is no harmony to be elicited by the quickest and most obedient of spirits, we may still embellish a place with some attraction of romance. We may learn to go far afield for associations, and handle them lightly when we have found them. Sometimes an old print comes to our aid; I have seen many a spot lit up at once with picturesque imaginations, by a reminiscence of Callot, or Sadeler, or Paul Brill. Dick Turpin has been my lay figure for many an English lane. And I suppose the Trossachs would hardly be the Trossachs for most tourists if a man of admirable romantic instinct had not peopled it for them with harmonious figures, and brought them thither with minds rightly prepared for the impression. There is half the battle in this preparation. For instance: I have rarely been able to visit, in the proper spirit, the wild and inhospitable places of our own Highlands. I am happier where it is tame and fertile, and not readily pleased without trees. I understand that there are some phases of mental trouble that harmonize well with such surroundings, and that some persons, by the dispensing power of the imagination, can go back several centuries in spirit, and put themselves into sympathy with the hunted, houseless, unsociable way of life, that was in its place upon these savage hills. Now, when I am sad, I like nature to charm me out of my sadness, like David before Saul; and the thought of these past ages strikes nothing in me but an unpleasant pity; so that I can never hit on the right humor for this sort of landscape, and lose much pleasure in consequence. Still, even here, if I were only let alone, and time enough were given, I should have

all manner of pleasures and take many clear and beautiful images away with me when I left. When we can not think ourselves into sympathy with the great features of a country, we learn to ignore them, and put our head among the grass for flowers, or pore, for long times together, over the changeful current of a stream. We come down to the sermon in stones, when we are shut out from any poem in the spread landscape. We begin to peep and botanize, we take an interest in birds and insects, we find many things beautiful in miniature. The reader will recollect the little summer scene in *Wuthering Heights*—the one warm scene, perhaps, in all that powerful, miserable novel—and the great feature that is made therein by grasses and flowers and a little sunshine: this is in the spirit of which I now speak. And, lastly, we can go indoors; interiors are sometimes as beautiful, often more picturesque, than the shows of the open air, and they have that quality of shelter of which I shall presently have more to say.

With all this in mind, I have often been tempted to put forth the paradox that any place is good enough to live a life in, while it is only in a few, and those highly favored, that we can pass a few hours agreeably. For, if we only stay long enough, we become at home in the neighborhood. Reminiscences spring up, like flowers, about uninteresting corners. We forget to some degree the superior loveliness of other places, and fall into a tolerant and sympathetic spirit which is its own reward and justification. Looking back the other day on some recollections of my own, I was astonished to find how much I owed to such a residence; six weeks in one unpleasant countryside had done more, it seemed, to quicken and educate my sensibilities than many years in places that jumped more nearly with my inclination.

The country to which I refer was a level and treeless plateau, over which the winds cut like a whip. For miles on miles it was the same. A river, indeed, fell into the sea near the town where I resided; but the valley of the river was shallow and bald for as far up as ever I had the heart to follow it. There were roads, certainly, but roads that

had no beauty or interest; for, as there was no timber, and but little irregularity of surface, you saw your whole walk exposed to you from the beginning: there was nothing left to fancy, nothing to expect, nothing to see by the wayside, save here and there an unhomely looking homestead, and here and there a solitary, spectacled stone-breaker; and you were only accompanied, as you went doggedly forward, by the gaunt telegraph-posts and the hum of the resonant wires in the keen sea-wind. To one who had learned to know their song in warm pleasant places by the Mediterranean, it seemed to taunt the country, and make it still bleaker by suggested contrast. Even the waste places by the side of the road were not, as Hawthorne liked to put it, "taken back to Nature" by any decent covering of vegetation. Wherever the land had the chance, it seemed to lie fallow. There is a certain tawny nudity of the South, bare sunburnt plains, colored like a lion, and hills clothed only in the blue transparent air; but this was of another description—this was the nakedness of the North; the earth seemed to know that it was naked, and was ashamed and cold.

It seemed to be always blowing on that coast. Indeed, this had passed into the speech of the inhabitants, and they saluted each other when they met with "Breezy, breezy," instead of the customary "Fine day" of farther south. These continual winds were not like the harvest breeze, that just keeps an equable pressure against your face as you walk, and serves to set all the trees talking over your head, or bring round you the smell of the wet surface of the country after a shower. They were of the bitter, hard, perisistent sort, that interferes with sight and respiration, and makes the eyes sore. Even such winds as these have their own merit in proper time and place. It is pleasant to see them brandish great masses of shadow. And what a power they have over the color of the world! How they ruffle the solid woodlands in their passage, and make them shudder and whiten like a single willow! There is nothing more vertiginous than a wind like this among the woods, with all its sights and noises; and the effect gets between some painters and their sober eyesight, so

that, even when the rest of their picture is calm, the foliage is colored like foliage in a gale. There was nothing, however, of this sort to be noticed in a country where there were no trees and hardly any shadows, save the passive shadows of clouds or those of rigid houses and walls. But the wind was nevertheless an occasion of pleasure; for nowhere could you taste more fully the pleasure of a sudden lull, or a place of opportune shelter. The reader knows what I mean; he must remember how, when he has sat himself down behind a dike on a hillside, he delighted to hear the wind hiss vainly through the crannies at his back; how his body tingled all over with warmth, and it began to dawn upon him, with a sort of slow surprise, that the country was beautiful, the heather purple, and the far-away hills all marbled with sun and shadow. Wordsworth, in a beautiful passage of the "Prelude," has used this as a figure for the feeling struck in us by the quiet by-streets of London after the uproar of the great thoroughfares; and the comparison may be turned the other way with as good effect:

> "Meanwhile the roar continues, till at length,
> Escaped as from an enemy, we turn
> Abruptly into some sequester'd nook,
> Still as a shelter'd place when winds blow loud!"

I remember meeting a man once, in a train, who told me of what must have been quite the most perfect instance of this pleasure of escape. He had gone up, one sunny, windy morning, to the top of a great cathedral somewhere abroad; I think it was Cologne Cathedral, the great unfinished marvel by the Rhine; and after a long while in dark stairways he issued at last into the sunshine, on a platform high above the town. At that elevation it was quite still and warm; the gale was only in the lower strata of the air, and he had forgotten it in the quiet interior of the church and during his long ascent; and so you may judge of his surprise when, resting his arms on the sunlit balustrade and looking over into the *Place* far below him, he saw the good people holding on their hats and leaning hard against the wind as they walked. There is some-

thing, to my fancy, quite perfect in this little experience of my fellow traveler's. The ways of men seem always very trivial to us when we find ourselves alone on a church top, with the blue sky and a few tall pinnacles, and see far below us the steep roofs and foreshortened buttresses, and the silent activity of the city streets; but how much more must they not have seemed so to him as he stood, not only above other men's business, but above other men's climate, in a golden zone like Apollo's!

This was the sort of pleasure I found in the country of which I write. The pleasure was to be out of the wind, and to keep it in memory all the time, and hug oneself upon the shelter. And it was only by the sea that any such sheltered places were to be found. Between the black worm-eaten headlands there are little bights and havens, well screened from the wind and the commotion of the external sea, where the sand and weeds look up into the gazer's face from a depth of tranquil water, and the sea-birds, screaming and flickering from the ruined crags, alone disturb the silence and the sunshine. One such place has impressed itself on my memory beyond all others. On a rock by the water's edge, old fighting men of the Norse breed had planted a double castle; the two stood wall to wall like semidetached villas; and yet feud had run so high between their owners, that one, from out of a window, shot the other as he stood in his own doorway. There is something in the juxtaposition of these two enemies full of tragic irony. It is grim to think of bearded men and bitter women taking hateful counsel together about the two hall-fires at night, when the sea boomed against the foundations and the wild winter wind was loose over the battlements. And in the study we may reconstruct for ourselves some pale figure of what life then was. Not so when we are there; when we are there such thoughts come to us only to intensify a contrary impression, and association is turned against itself. I remember walking thither three afternoons in succession, my eyes weary with being set against the wind, and how, dropping suddenly over the edge of the down, I found myself in a new world of warmth and shelter. The wind, from which I had es-

caped, "as from an enemy," was seemingly quite local. It carried no clouds with it, and came from such a quarter that it did not trouble the sea within view. The two castles, black and ruinous as the rocks about them, were still distinguishable from these by something more insecure and fantastic in the outline, something that the last storm had left imminent and the next would demolish entirely. It would be difficult to render in words the sense of peace that took possession of me on these three afternoons. It was helped out, as I have said, by the contrast. The shore was battered and bemauled by previous tempests; I had the memory at heart of the insane strife of the pigmies who had erected these two castles and lived in them in mutual distrust and enmity, and knew I had only to put my head out of this little cup of shelter to find the hard wind blowing in my eyes; and yet there were the two great tracts of motionless blue air and peaceful sea looking on, unconcerned and apart, at the turmoil of the present moment and the memorials of the precarious past. There is ever something transitory and fretful in the impression of a high wind under a cloudless sky; it seems to have no root in the constitution of things; it must speedily begin to faint and wither away like a cut flower. And on those days the thought of the wind and the thought of human life came very near together in my mind. Our noisy years did indeed seem moments in the being of the eternal silence: and the wind, in the face of that great field of stationary blue, was as the wind of a butterfly's wing. The placidity of the sea was a thing likewise to be remembered. Shelley speaks of the sea as "hungering for calm," and in this place one learned to understand the phrase. Looking down into these green waters from the broken edge of the rock, or swimming leisurely in the sunshine, it seemed to me that they were enjoying their own tranquillity; and when now and again it was disturbed by a wind ripple on the surface, or the quick black passage of a fish far below, they settled back again (one could fancy) with relief.

On shore too, in the little nook of shelter, everything was so subdued and still that the least particular struck in

me a pleasurable surprise. The desultory crackling of the whinpods in the afternoon sun usurped the ear. The hot, sweet breath of the bank, that had been saturated all day long with sunshine, and now exhaled it into my face, was like the breath of a fellow creature. I remember that I was haunted by two lines of French verse; in some dumb way they seemed to fit my surroundings and give expression to the contentment that was in me, and I kept repeating to myself—

> "Mon cœur est un luth suspendu,
> Sitôt qu'on le touche, il résonne."

I can give no reason why these lines came to me at this time; and for that very cause I repeat them here. For all I know, they may serve to complete the impression in the mind of the reader, as they were certainly a part of it for me.

And this happened to me in the place of all others where I liked least to stay. When I think of it I grow ashamed of my own ingratitude. "Out of the strong came forth sweetness." There, in the bleak and gusty North, I received, perhaps, my strongest impression of peace. I saw the sea to be great and calm; and the earth, in that little corner, was all alive and friendly to me. So, wherever a man is, he will find something to please and pacify him: in the town he will meet pleasant faces of men and women, and see beautiful flowers at a window, or hear a cage-bird singing at the corner of the gloomiest street; and for the country, there is no country without some amenity—let him only look for it in the right spirit, and he will surely find.

AN AUTUMN EFFECT

"Nous ne décrivons jamais mieux la nature que lorsque nous nous efforçons d'exprimer sobrement et simplement l'impression que nous en avons reçue.—M. André Theuriet, "L'Automne dans les bois," *Revue des Deux Mondes*, 1st Oct. 1874, p. 562.[1]

A COUNTRY rapidly passed through under favorable auspices may leave upon us a unity of impression that would only be disturbed and dissipated if we stayed longer. Clear vision goes with the quick foot. Things fall for us into a sort of natural perspective when we see them for a moment in going by; we generalize boldly and simply, and are gone before the sun is overcast, before the rain falls, before the season can steal like a dial-hand from his figure, before the lights and shadows, shifting round toward nightfall, can show us the other side of things, and belie what they showed us in the morning. We expose our mind to the landscape (as we would expose the prepared plate in the camera) for the moment only during which the effect endures; and we are away before the effect can change. Hence we shall have in our memories a long scroll of continuous wayside pictures, all imbued already with the prevailing sentiment of the season, the weather, and the landscape, and certain to be unified more and more, as time goes on, by the unconscious processes of thought. So that we who have only looked at a country over our shoulder, so to speak, as we went by, will have a conception of it far

[1] I had nearly finished the transcription of the following pages, when I saw on a friend's table the number containing the piece from which this sentence is extracted, and, struck with a similarity of title, took it home with me and read it with indescribable satisfaction. I do not know whether I more envy M. Theuriet the pleasure of having written this delightful article, or the reader the pleasure, which I hope he has still before him, of reading it once and again, and lingering over the passages that please him most.

more memorable and articulate than a man who has lived there all his life from a child upward, and had his impression of to-day modified by that of to-morrow, and belied by that of the day after, till at length the stable characteristics of the country are all blotted out from him behind the confusion of variable effect.

There is one remark I desire to make before beginning to describe my little pilgrimage, because, from such a point of view, this pilgrimage was especially fortunate: the effect was simple and continuous throughout. One more remark, however, I desire to make; and it is one on which I lay great stress. I have spoken in a previous essay on how "We saw places through our humors as through differently colored glasses" and just indicated some of the conditions that modify the sight we have of scenery. This is not the place to develop the theory of the matter; it will be enough to say that there goes to the building up of any general idea of a country, besides the question of good or bad temper, an infinity of infinitesimal conditions, that no man knows what these conditions are, or which of them at any moment is effective, and hence if I wait to communicate to others the very complex improvision given to me by a tract of variegated country as I went over it for three days in succession, I shall do best if I follow instinct simply, and chronicle, in good faith, all that I vividly remember.

Observe it is not the aspect of the country, but the impression only, that I can hope to reproduce, and there went to the making of this impression many things that I should certainly omit if I were trying to describe the country, myself abstracted, but which I must as certainly preserve and accentuate, if I am to try this humbler and wiser task of reproducing the impression. The action and reaction of our own moods upon scenery, and the scenery upon our moods, is so constant and subtle that no man can follow it out intelligently to an end; and we can not tell where the influence of our surroundings ceases, or which of our thoughts is not, in some deepest sense, suggested from without.

And so it should be noticed that I began my little pil-

grimage in the most enviable of all humors: that in which a person, with a sufficiency of money and a knapsack, turns his back on a town and walks forward into a country of which he knows only by the vague report of others. Such a one has not surrendered his will and contracted for the next hundred miles, like a man on a railway. He may change his mind at every finger-post, and, where ways meet, follow vague preferences freely and go the low road or the high, choose the shadow or the sunshine, suffer himself to be tempted by the lane that turns immediately into the woods, or the broad road that lies open before him into the distance, and shows him the far-off spires of some city, or a range of mountain tops, or a rim of sea, perhaps, along a low horizon. In short, he may gratify his every whim and fancy, without a pang of reproving conscience, or the least jostle to his self-respect. It is true, however, that most men do not possess the faculty of free action, the priceless gift of being able to live for the moment only; and as they begin to go forward on their journey, they will find that they have made for themselves new fetters. Slight projects they may have entertained for a moment, half in jest, become iron laws to them, they know not why. They will be led by the nose by these vague reports of which I spoke above; and the mere fact that their informant mentioned one village and not another will compel their footsteps with inexplicable power. And yet a little while, yet a few days of this fictitious liberty, and they will begin to hear imperious voices calling on them to return; and some passion, some duty, some worthy or unworthy expectation, will set its hand upon their shoulder and lead them back into the old paths. Once and again we have all made the experiment. We know the end of it right well. And yet if we make it for the hundredth time to-morrow, it will have the same charm as ever; our heart will beat and our eyes will be bright, as we leave the town behind us, and we shall feel once again (as we have felt so often before) that we are cutting ourselves loose for ever from our whole past life, with all its sins and follies and circumscriptions, and go forward as a new creature into a new world.

It was well, perhaps, that I had this first enthusiasm to encourage me up the long hill above High Wycombe; for the day was a bad day for walking at best, and now began to draw toward afternoon, dull, heavy, and lifeless. A pall of gray cloud covered the sky, and its color reacted on the color of the landscape. Near at hand, indeed, the hedgerow trees were still fairly green, shot through with bright autumnal yellows, bright as sunshine. But a little way off, the solid bricks of woodland that lay squarely on slope and hilltop were not green, but russet and gray, and ever less russet and more gray as they drew off into the distance. As they drew off into the distance, also, the woods seemed to mass themselves together, and lay thin and straight, like clouds, upon the limit of one's view. Not that this massing was complete, or gave the idea of any extent of forest, for every here and there the trees would break up and go down into a valley in open order, or stand in long Indian file along the horizon, tree after tree relieved, foolishly enough, against the sky. I say foolishly enough, although I have seen the effect employed cleverly in art, and such long line of single trees thrown out against the customary sunset of a Japanese picture with a certain fantastic effect that was not to be despised; but this was over water and level land, where it did not jar, as here, with the soft contour of hills and valleys. The whole scene had an indefinable look of being painted, the color was so abstract and correct, and there was something so sketchy and merely impressional about these distant single trees on the horizon that one was forced to think of it all as of a clever French landscape. For it is rather in nature that we see resemblance to art, than in art to nature; and we say a hundred times, "How like a picture!" for once that we say, "How like the truth!" The forms in which we learn to think of landscape are forms that we have got from painted canvas. Any man can see and understand a picture; it is reserved for the few to separate anything out of the confusion of nature, and see that distinctly and with intelligence.

Thus I know one who has a magical faculty of understanding, and reproducing in words, the gestures of peo-

ple within picture-frames, or hung on the wall in tapestry; and yet ask him to describe the live man who has just passed him in the street, and he can not—he has not seen it, it has been nothing to him, and is gone forever. So that most of us, when they look abroad over a landscape, go merely feeling for what they have already seen reproduced in pictures.

The sun came out before I had been long on my way; and as I had got by that time to the top of the ascent, and was now treading a labyrinth of confined by-roads, my whole view brightened considerably in color, for it was the distance only that was gray and cold, and the distance I could see no longer. Overhead there was a wonderful caroling of larks which seemed to follow me as I went. Indeed, during all the time I was in that country the larks did not desert me. The air was alive with them from High Wycombe to Tring; and as, day after day, their "shrill delight" fell upon me out of the vacant sky, they began to take such a prominence over other conditions, and form so integral a part of my conception of the country, that I could have baptized it "The Country of Larks." This, of course, might just as well have been in early spring; but everything else was deeply imbued with the sentiment of the later year. There was no stir of insects in the grass. The sunshine was more golden, and gave less heat than summer sunshine; and the shadows under the hedge were somewhat blue and misty. It was only in autumn that you could have seen the mingled green and yellow of the elm foliage, and the fallen leaves that lay about the road, and covered the surface of wayside pools so thickly that the sun was reflected only here and there from little joints and pinholes in that brown coat of proof; or that your ear would have been troubled, as you went forward, by the occasional report of fowling-pieces from all directions and all degrees of distance.

For a long time this dropping fire was the one sign of human activity that came to disturb me as I walked. The lanes were profoundly still. They would have been sad but for the sunshine and the singing of the larks. And as it was, there came over me at times a feeling of isolation

that was not disagreeable, and yet was enough to make me quicken my steps eagerly when I saw some one before me on the road. This fellow voyager proved to be no less a person than the parish constable. It had occurred to me that in a district which was so little populous and so well wooded, a criminal of any intelligence might play hide-and-seek with the authorities for months; and this idea was strengthened by the aspect of the portly constable as he walked by my side with deliberate dignity and turned-out toes. But a few minutes' converse set my heart at rest. These rural criminals are very tame birds, it appeared. If my informant did not immediately lay his hand on an offender, he was content to wait: some evening after nightfall there would come a tap at his door, and the outlaw, weary of outlawry, would give himself quietly up to undergo sentence, and resume his position in the life of the countryside. Married men caused him no disquietude whatever; he had them fast by the foot; sooner or later they would come back to see their wives, a peeping neighbor would pass the word, and my portly constable would walk quietly over and take the bird sitting. And if there were a few who had no particular ties in the neighborhood, and preferred to shift into another county when they fell into trouble, their departure moved the placid constable in no degree. He was of Dogberry's opinion; and if a man would not stand in the Prince's name, he took no note of him, but let him go, and thanked God he was rid of a knave. And surely the crime and the law were in admirable keeping; rustic constable was well met with rustic offender; the officer sitting at home over a bit of fire until the criminal came to visit him, and the criminal coming—it was a fair match. One felt as if this must have been the order in that delightful seaboard Bohemia where Florizel and Perdita courted in such sweet accents, and the Puritan sang psalms to hornpipes, and the four-and-twenty shearers danced with nosegays in their bosoms, and chanted their three songs apiece at the old shepherd's festival; and one could not help picturing to oneself what havoc among good people's purses, and tribulation for benignant constable, might be worked

here by the arrival, over stile and footpath, of a new Autolycus.

Bidding good morning to my fellow traveler, I left the road and struck across country. It was rather a revelation to pass from between the hedgerows and find quite a bustle on the other side, a great coming and going of school-children upon by-paths, and, in every second field, lusty horses and stout country-folk a-plowing. The way I followed took me through many fields thus occupied, and through many strips of plantation, and then over a little space of smooth turf, very pleasant to the feet, set with tall fir-trees and clamorous with rooks making ready for the winter, and so back again into the quiet road. I was now not far from the end of my day's journey. A few hundred yards farther, and, passing through a gap in the hedge, I began to go downhill through a pretty extensive tract of young beeches. I was soon in shadow myself, but the afternoon sun still colored the upmost boughs of the wood, and made a fire over my head in the autumnal foliage. A little faint vapor lay among the slim tree-stems in the bottom of the hollow; and from farther up I heard from time to time an outburst of gross laughter, as though clowns were making merry in the bush. There was something about the atmosphere that brought all sights and sounds home to one with a singular purity, so that I felt as if my senses had been washed with water. After I had crossed the little zone of mist, the path began to remount the hill; and just as I, mounting along with it, had got back again, from the head downward, into the thin golden sunshine, I saw in front of me a donkey tied to a tree. Now, I have a certain liking for donkeys, principally, I believe, because of the delightful things that Sterne has written of them. But this was not after the pattern of the ass at Lyons. He was of a white color, that seemed to fit him rather for rare festal occasions than for constant drudgery. Besides, he was very small, and of the daintiest proportions you can imagine in a donkey. And so, sure enough, you had only to look at him to see he had never worked. There was something too roguish and wanton in his face, a look too like that of a schoolboy

or a street Arab, to have survived much cudgeling. It was plain that these feet had kicked off sportive children oftener than they had plodded with a freight through miry lanes. He was altogether a fine-weather, holiday sort of donkey; and though he was just then somewhat solemnized and rueful, he still gave proof of the levity of his disposition by impudently wagging his ears at me as I drew near. I say he was somewhat solemnized just then; for, with the admirable instinct of all men and animals under restraint, he had so wound and wound the halter about the tree that he could go neither back nor forward, nor so much as put down his head to browse. There he stood, poor rogue, part puzzled, part angry, part, I believe, amused. He had not given up hope, and dully revolved the problem in his head, giving ever and again another jerk at the few inches of free rope that still remained unwound. A humorous sort of sympathy for the creature took hold upon me. I went up, and, not without some trouble on my part, and much distrust and resistance on the part of Neddy, got him forced backward until the whole length of the halter was set loose, and he was once more as free a donkey as I dared to make him. I was pleased (as people are) with this friendly action to a fellow creature in tribulation, and glanced back over my shoulder to see how he was profiting by his freedom. The brute was looking after me; and no sooner did he catch my eye than he put up his long white face into the air, pulled an impudent mouth at me, and began to bray derisively. If ever any one person made a grimace at another, that donkey made a grimace at me. The hardened ingratitude of his behavior, and the impertinence that inspired his whole face as he curled up his lip, and showed his teeth, and began to bray, so tickled me, and was so much in keeping with what I had imagined to myself about his character, that I could not find it in my heart to be angry, and burst into a peal of hearty laughter. This seemed to strike the ass as a repartee, so he brayed at me again by way of rejoinder; and we went on for a while, braying and laughing, until I began to grow a-weary of it, and, shouting a derisive farewell, turned to pursue my way. In so doing—it was

like going suddenly into cold water—I found myself face to face with a prim little old maid. She was all in a flutter, the poor old dear! She had concluded beyond question that this must be a lunatic who stood laughing aloud at a white donkey in the placid beech woods. I was sure, by her face, that she had already recommended her spirit most religiously to Heaven, and prepared herself for the worst. And so, to reassure her, I uncovered and besought her, after a very staid fashion, to put me on my way to Great Missenden. Her voice trembled a little, to be sure, but I think her mind was set at rest; and she told me, very explicitly, to follow the path until I came to the end of the wood, and then I should see the village below me in the bottom of the valley. And, with mutual courtesies, the little old maid and I went on our respective ways.

Nor had she misled me. Great Missenden was close at hand, as she had said, in the trough of a gentle valley, with many great elms about it. The smoke from its chimneys went up pleasantly in the afternoon sunshine. The sleepy hum of a threshing-machine filled the neighboring fields and hung about the quaint street corners. A little above, the church sits well back on its haunches against the hillside—an attitude for a church, you know, that makes it look as if it could be ever so much higher if it liked; and the trees grew about it thickly, so as to make a density of shade in the churchyard. A very quiet place it looks; and yet I saw many boards and posters about threatening dire punishment against those who broke the church windows or defaced the precinct, and offering rewards for the apprehension of those who had done the like already. It was fair-day in Great Missenden. There were three stalls set up, *sub jove*, for the sale of pastry and cheap toys; and a great number of holiday children thronged about the stalls, and noisily invaded every corner of the straggling village. They came round me by coveys, blowing simultaneously upon penny trumpets as though they imagined I should fall to pieces like the battlements of Jericho. I noticed one among them who could make a wheel of himself like a London boy, and seemingly enjoyed a grave preeminence upon the strength of the

accomplishment. By and by, however, the trumpets began to weary me, and I went indoors, leaving the fair, I fancy, at its height.

Night had fallen before I ventured forth again. It was pitch dark in the village street, and the darkness seemed only the greater for a light here and there in an uncurtained window or from an open door. Into one such window I was rude enough to peep, and saw within a charming *genre* picture. In a room, all white wainscot and crimson wall-paper, a perfect gem of color after the black, empty darkness in which I had been groping, a pretty girl was telling a story, as well as I could make out, to an attentive child upon her knee, while an old woman sat placidly dozing over the fire. You may be sure I was not behindhand with a story for myself—a good old story after the manner of G. P. R. James and the village melodramas, with a wicked squire, and poachers, and an attorney, and a virtuous young man with a genius for mechanics, who should love, and protect, and ultimately marry the girl in the crimson room. Baudelaire has a few dainty sentences on the fancies that we are inspired with when we look through a window into other people's lives; and I think Dickens has somewhere enlarged on the same text. The subject, at least, is one that I am seldom weary of entertaining. I remember, night after night, at Brussels, watching a good family sup together, make merry, and retire to rest; and night after night I waited to see the candles lit, and the salad made, and the last salutations dutifully exchanged, without any abatement of interest. Night after night I found the scene rivet my attention and keep me awake in bed with all manner of quaint imaginations. Much of the pleasure of the *Arabian Nights* hinges upon this Asmodean interest; and we are not weary of lifting other people's roofs, and going about behind the scenes of life with the Caliph and the serviceable Giaffar. It is a salutary exercise, besides; it is salutary to get out of ourselves and see people living together in perfect unconsciousness of our existence, as they will live when we are gone. If tomorrow the blow falls, and the worst of our ill fears is

realized, the girl will none the less tell stories to the child on her lap in the cottage at Great Missenden, nor the good Belgians light their candle, and mix their salad, and go orderly to bed.

The foundations of the universe will not be shaken after all. It is but a storm in the teapot; in an hour this storm will have blown over, and the world will still be fair about our path, and people will meet us as before, with pleasant countenances and kind words; and with patience and courage we may yet rebuild the ruined pleasure-house of fancy.

The next morning was sunny overhead and damp underfoot, with a thrill in the air like a reminiscence of frost. I went up into the sloping garden behind the inn and smoked a pipe pleasantly enough, to the tune of my landlady's lamentations over sundry cabbages and cauliflowers that had been spoiled by caterpillars. She had been so much pleased in the summer time, she said, to see the garden all hovered over by white butterflies. And now, look at the end of it! She could nowise reconcile this with her moral sense. And, indeed, unless these butterflies are created with a side-look to the composition of improving apologues, it is not altogether easy, even for people who have read Hegel and Dr. M'Cosh, to decide intelligibly upon the issue raised. Then I fell into a long and abstruse calculation with my landlord; having for object to compare the distance driven by him during eight years' service on the box of the Wendover coach with the girth of the round world itself. We tackled the question most conscientiously, made all necessary allowance for Sundays and leap-years, and were just coming to a triumphant conclusion of our labors when we were stayed by a small lacuna in my information. I did not know the circumference of the earth. The landlord knew it, to be sure—plainly he had made the same calculation twice and once before,—but he wanted confidence in his own figures, and from the moment I showed myself so poor a second seemed to lose all interest in the result.

Wendover (which was my next stage) lies in the same valley with Great Missenden, but at the foot of it, where

the hills trend off on either hand like a coast-line, and a great hemisphere of plain lies, like a sea, before one. I went up a chalky road, until I had a good outlook over the place. The vale, as it opened out into the plain, was shallow, and a little bare, perhaps, but full of graceful convolutions. From the level to which I had now attained the fields were exposed before me like a map, and I could see all that bustle of autumn field-work which had been hid from me yesterday behind the hedgerows, or shown to me only for a moment as I followed the footpath. Wendover lay well down in the midst, with mountains of foliage about it. The great plain stretched away to the northward, variegated near at hand with the quaint pattern of the fields, but growing ever more and more indistinct, until it became a mere hurly-burly of trees and bright crescents of river, and snatches of slanting road, and finally melted into the ambiguous cloudland over the horizon. The sky was an opal-gray, touched here and there with blue, and with certain faint russets that looked as if they were reflections of the color of the autumnal woods below. I could hear the plowmen shouting to their horses, the uninterrupted carol of larks innumerable overhead, and, from a field where the shepherd was marshaling his flock, a sweet tumultuous tinkle of sheep-bells. All these noises came to me very thin and distinct in the clear air. There was a wonderful sentiment of distance and atmosphere about the day and the place.

I mounted the hill yet farther by a rough staircase of chalky footholds cut in the turf. The hills about Wendover and, as far as I could see, all the hills in Buckinghamshire, wear a sort of hood of beech plantation; but in this particular case the hood had been suffered to extend itself into something more like a cloak, and hung down about the shoulders of the hill in wide folds, instead of lying flatly along the summit. The trees grew so close, and their boughs were so matted together, that the whole wood looked as dense as a bush of heather. The prevailing color was a dull, smoldering red, touched here and here with vivid yellow. But the autumn had scarce advanced beyond the outworks; it was still almost summer

in the heart of the wood; and as soon as I had scrambled through the hedge I found myself in a dim green forest atmosphere under eaves of virgin foliage. In places where the wood had itself for a background and the trees were massed together thickly, the color became intensified and almost gem-like; a perfect fire of green, that seemed none the less green for a few specks of autumn gold. None of the trees were of any considerable age or stature; but they grew well together, I have said; and as the road turned and wound among them they fell into pleasant groupings and broke the light up pleasantly. Sometimes there would be a colonnade of slim, straight tree-stems with the light running down them as down the shafts of pillars, that looked as if it ought to lead to something, and led only to a corner of somber and intricate jungle. Sometimes a spray of delicate foliage would be thrown out flat, the light lying flatly along the top of it, so that against a dark background it seemed almost luminous. There was a great hush over the thicket (for, indeed, it was more of a thicket than a wood); and the vague rumors that went among the tree-tops, and the occasional rustling of big birds or hares among the undergrowth, had in them a note of almost treacherous stealthiness, that put the imagination on its guard and made me walk warily on the russet carpeting of last year's leaves. The spirit of the place seemed to be all attention; the wood listened as I went, and held its breath to number my footfalls. One could not help feeling that there ought to be some reason for this stillness: whether, as the bright old legend goes, Pan lay somewhere near in a siesta, or whether, perhaps, the heaven was meditating rain, and the first drops would soon come pattering through the leaves. It was not unpleasant, in such a humor, to catch sight, ever and anon, of large spaces of the open plain. This happened only where the path lay much upon the slope, and there was a flaw in the solid leafy thatch of the wood at some distance below the level at which I chanced myself to be walking; then, indeed, little scraps of foreshortened distance, miniature fields, and Lilliputian houses and hedgerow trees would appear for a moment in the aperture, and grow

larger and smaller, and change and melt one into another, as I continued to go forward, and so shift my point of view.

For ten minutes, perhaps, I had heard from somewhere before me in the wood a strange, continuous noise, as of clucking, cooing, and gobbling, now and again interrupted by a harsh scream. As I advanced toward this noise, it began to grow lighter about me, and I caught sight, through the trees, of sundry gables and enclosure walls, and something like the tops of a rickyard. And sure enough, a rickyard it proved to be, and a neat little farmsteading, with the beech-woods growing almost to the door of it. Just before me, however, as I came up the path, the trees drew back and let in a wide flood of daylight on to a circular lawn. It was here that the noises had their origin. More than a score of peacocks (there are altogether thirty at the farm), a proper contingent of peahens, and a great multitude that I could not number of more ordinary barndoor fowls, were all feeding together on this little open lawn among the beeches. They fed in a dense crowd, which swayed to and fro, and came hither and thither as by a sort of tide, and of which the surface was agitated like the surface of a sea as each bird guzzled his head along the ground after the scattered corn. The clucking, cooing noise that had led me thither was formed by the blending together of countless expressions of individual contentment into one collective expression of contentment, or general grace during meat. Every now and again a big peacock would separate himself from the mob and take a stately turn or two about the lawn, or perhaps mount for a moment upon the rail, and there shrilly publish to the world his satisfaction with himself and what he had to eat. It happened, for my sins, that none of these admirable birds had anything beyond the merest rudiment of a tail. Tails, it seemed, were out of season just then. But they had their necks for all that; and by their necks alone they do as much surpass all the other birds of our gray climate as they fall in quality of song below the blackbird or the lark. Surely the peacock, with its incomparable parade of glorious color and the scrannel

voice of it issuing forth, as in mockery, from its painted throat, must, like my landlady's butterflies at Great Missenden, have been invented by some skilful fabulist for the consolation and support of homely virtue: or rather, perhaps, by a fabulist not quite so skilful, who made points for the moment without having a studious enough eye to the complete effect; for I thought these melting greens and blues so beautiful that afternoon, that I would have given them my vote just then before the sweetest pipe in all the spring woods. For indeed there is no piece of color of the same extent in nature, that will so flatter and satisfy the lust of a man's eyes; and to come upon so many of them, after these acres of stone-colored heavens and russet woods, and gray-brown plowlands and white roads, was like going three whole days' journey to the southward, or a month back into the summer.

I was sorry to leave *Peacock Farm*—for so the place is called, after the name of its splendid pensioners—and go forward again in the quiet woods. It began to grow both damp and dusk under the beeches; and as the day declined the color faded out of the foliage; and shadow, without form and void, took the place of all the fine tracery of leaves and delicate gradations of living green that had before accompanied my walk. I had been sorry to leave *Peacock Farm,* but I was not sorry to find myself once more in the open road, under a pale and somewhat troubled-looking evening sky, and put my best foot foremost for the inn at Wendover.

Wendover, in itself, is a straggling, purposeless sort of place. Everybody seems to have had his own opinion as to how the street should go; or rather, every now and then a man seems to have arisen with a new idea on the subject, and led away a little sect of neighbors to join in his heresy. It would have somewhat the look of an abortive watering-place, such as we may now see them here and there along the coast, but for the age of the houses, the comely quiet design of some of them, and the look of long habitation, of a life that is settled and rooted, and makes it worth while to train flowers about the windows, and otherwise shape the dwelling to the humor of the inhabitant. The

church, which might perhaps have served as rallying-point for these loose houses, and pulled the township into something like intelligible unity, stands some distance off among great trees; but the inn (to take the public buildings in order of importance) is in what I understand to be the principal street: a pleasant old house, with bay windows, and three peaked gables, and many swallows' nests plastered about the eaves.

The interior of the inn was answerable to the outside: indeed, I never saw any room much more to be admired than the low wainscoted parlor in which I spent the remainder of the evening. It was a short oblong in shape, save that the fireplace was built across one of the angles so as to cut it partially off, and the opposite angle was similarly truncated by a corner cupboard. The wainscot was white, and there was a Turkey carpet on the floor, so old it might have been imported by Walter Shandy before he retired, worn almost through in some places, but in others making a good show of blues and oranges, none the less harmonious for being somewhat faded. The corner cupboard was agreeable in design; and there were just the right things upon the shelves—decanters and tumblers, and blue plates, and one red rose in a glass of water. The furniture was old-fashioned and stiff. Everything was in keeping, down to the ponderous leaden inkstand on the round table. And you may fancy how pleasant it looked, all flushed and flickered over by the light of a brisk companionable fire, and seen, in a strange, tilted sort of perspective, in the three compartments of the old mirror above the chimney. As I sat reading in the great armchair, I kept looking round with the tail of my eye at the quaint, bright picture that was about me, and could not help some pleasure and a certain childish pride in forming part of it. The book I read was about Italy in the early Renaissance, the pageantries and the light loves of princes, the passion of men for learning, and poetry, and art; but it was written, by good luck, after a solid, prosaic fashion, that suited the room infinitely more nearly than the matter; and the result was that I thought less, perhaps, of Lippo Lippi, or Lorenzo, or Politian, than of the good

Englishman who had written in that volume what he knew of them, and taken so much pleasure in his solemn polysyllables.

I was not left without society. My landlord had a very pretty little daughter, whom we shall call Lizzie. If I had made any notes at the time, I might be able to tell you something definite of her appearance. But faces have a trick of growing more and more spiritualized and abstract in the memory, until nothing remains of them but a look, a haunting expression; just that secret quality in a face that is apt to slip out somehow under the cunningest painter's touch, and leave the portrait dead for the lack of it. And if it is hard to catch with the finest of camel's-hair pencils, you may think how hopeless it must be to pursue after it with clumsy words. If I say, for instance, that this look, which I remember as Lizzie, was something wistful that seemed partly to come of slyness and in part of simplicity, and that I am inclined to imagine it had something to do with the daintiest suspicion of a cast in one of her large eyes, I shall have said all that I can, and the reader will not be much advanced toward comprehension. I had struck up an acquaintance with this little damsel in the morning, and professed much interest in her dolls, and an impatient desire to see the large one which was kept locked away for great occasions. And so I had not been very long in the parlor before the door opened, and in came Miss Lizzie with two dolls tucked clumsily under her arm. She was followed by her brother John, a year or so younger than herself, not simply to play propriety at our interview, but to show his own two whips in emulation of his sister's dolls. I did my best to make myself agreeable to my visitors, showing much admiration for the dolls and dolls' dresses, and, with a very serious demeanor, asking many questions about their age and character. I do not think that Lizzie distrusted my sincerity, but it was evident that she was both bewildered and a little contemptuous. Although she was ready herself to treat her dolls as if they were alive, she seemed to think rather poorly of any grown person who could fall heartily into the spirit of the fiction. Sometimes she would

look at me with gravity and a sort of disquietude, as though she really feared I must be out of my wits. Sometimes, as when I inquired too particularly into the question of their names, she laughed at me so long and heartily that I began to feel almost embarrassed. But when, in an evil moment, I asked to be allowed to kiss one of them, she could keep herself no longer to herself. Clambering down from the chair on which she sat perched to show me, Cornelia-like, her jewels, she ran straight out of the room and into the bar—it was just across the passage—and I could hear her telling her mother in loud tones, but apparently more in sorrow than in merriment, that *the gentleman in the parlor wanted to kiss Dolly.* I fancy she was determined to save me from this humiliating action, even in spite of myself, for she never gave me the desired permission. She reminded me of an old dog I once knew, who would never suffer the master of the house to dance, out of an exaggerated sense of the dignity of that master's place and carriage.

After the young people were gone there was but one more incident ere I went to bed. I heard a party of children go up and down the dark street for a while, singing together sweetly. And the mystery of this little incident was so pleasant to me that I purposely refrained from asking who they were, and wherefore they went singing at so late an hour. One can rarely be in a pleasant place without meeting with some pleasant accident. I have a conviction that these children would not have gone singing before the inn unless the inn-parlor had been the delightful place it was. At least, if I had been in the customary public room of the modern hotel, with all its disproportions and discomforts, my ears would have been dull, and there would have been some ugly temper or other uppermost in my spirit, and so they would have wasted their songs upon an unworthy hearer.

Next morning I went along to visit the church. It is a long-backed red-and-white building, very much restored, and stands in a pleasant graveyard among those great trees of which I have spoken already. The sky was drowned in a mist. Now and again pulses of cold wind

went about the enclosure, and set the branches busy overhead, and the dead leaves scurrying into the angles of the church buttresses. Now and again, also, I could hear the dull sudden fall of a chestnut among the grass—the dog would bark before the rectory door—or there would come a clinking of pails from the stable-yard behind. But in spite of these occasional interruptions—in spite, also, of the continuous autumn twittering that filled the trees—the chief impression somehow was one as of utter silence, insomuch that the little greenish bell that peeped out of a window in the tower disquieted me with a sense of some possible and more inharmonious disturbance. The grass was wet, as if with a hoar-frost that had just been melted. I do not know that ever I saw a morning more autumnal. As I went to and fro among the graves, I saw some flowers set reverently before a recently erected tomb, and drawing near was almost startled to find they lay on the grave of a man seventy-two years old when he died. We are accustomed to strew flowers only over the young, where love has been cut short untimely, and great possibilities have been restrained by death. We strew them there in token that these possibilities, in some deeper sense, shall yet be realized, and the touch of our dead loves remain with us and guide us to the end. And yet there was more significance, perhaps, and perhaps a greater consolation, in this little nosegay on the grave of one who had died old. We are apt to make so much of the tragedy of death, and think so little of the enduring tragedy of some men's lives, that we see more to lament for in a life cut off in the midst of usefulness and love, than in one that miserably survives all love and usefulness, and goes about the world the phantom of itself, without hope, or joy, or any consolation. These flowers seemed not so much the token of love that survived death, as of something yet more beautiful—of love that had lived a man's life out to an end with him, and been faithful and companionable, and not weary of loving, throughout all these years.

The morning cleared a little, and the sky was once more the old stone-colored vault over the sallow meadows and

the russet woods, as I set forth on a dog-cart from Wendover to Tring. The road lay for a good distance along the side of the hills, with the great plain below on one hand, and the beech-woods above on the other. The fields were busy with people plowing and sowing; every here and there a jug of ale stood in the angle of the hedge, and I could see many a team wait smoking in the furrow as plowman or sower stepped aside for a moment to take a draft. Over all the brown plowlands, and under all the leafless hedgerows, there was a stout piece of labor abroad, and, as it were, a spirit of picnic. The horses smoked and the men labored and shouted and drank in the sharp autumn morning; so that one had a strong effect of large, open-air existence. The fellow who drove me was something of a humorist; and his conversation was all in praise of an agricultural laborer's way of life. It was he who called my attention to these jugs of ale by the hedgerow; he could not sufficiently express the liberality of these men's wages; he told me how sharp an appetite was given by breaking up the earth in the morning air, whether with plow or spade, and cordially admired this provision of nature. He sang *O fortunatos agricolas!* indeed, in every possible key, and with many cunning inflections, till I began to wonder what was the use of such people as Mr. Arch, and to sing the same air myself in a more diffident manner.

Tring was reached, and then Tring railway station; for the two are not very near, the good people of Tring having held the railway, of old days, in extreme apprehension, lest some day it should break loose in the town and work mischief. I had a last walk, among russet beeches as usual, and the air filled, as usual, with the caroling of larks; I heard shots fired in the distance, and saw, as a new sign of the fulfilled autumn, two horsemen exercising a pack of foxhounds. And then the train came and carried me back to London.

A WINTER'S WALK IN CARRICK AND GALLOWAY

(A FRAGMENT: 1876)

AT THE famous bridge of Doon, Kyle, the central district of the shire of Ayr, marches with Carrick, the most southerly. On the Carrick side of the river rises a hill of somewhat gentle conformation, cleft with shallow dells, and sown here and there with farms and tufts of wood. Inland, it loses itself, joining, I suppose, the great herd of similar hills that occupies the center of the Lowlands. Toward the sea it swells out the coast-line into a protuberance, like a bay window in a plan, and is fortified against the surf behind bold crags. This hill is known as the Brown Hill of Carrick, or, more shortly, Brown Carrick.

It had snowed overnight. The fields were all sheeted up; they were tucked in among the snow, and their shape was modeled through the pliant counterpane, like children tucked in by a fond mother. The wind had made ripples and folds upon the surface, like what the sea, in quiet weather, leaves upon the sand. There was a frosty stifle in the air. An effusion of coppery light on the summit of Brown Carrick showed where the sun was trying to look through; but along the horizon clouds of cold fog had settled down, so that there was no distinction of sky and sea. Over the white shoulders of the headlands, or in the opening of bays, there was nothing but a great vacancy and blackness; and the road as it drew near the edge of the cliff seemed to skirt the shores of creation and void space.

The snow crunched underfoot, and at farms all the

Illustrated London News, Summer Number, 1896.

dogs broke out barking as they smelt a passer-by upon the road. I met a fine old fellow, who might have sat as the father in "The Cotter's Saturday Night," and who swore most heathenishly at a cow he was driving. And a little after I scraped acquaintance with a poor body tramping out to gather cockles. His face was wrinkled by exposure; it was broken up into flakes and channels, like mud beginning to dry, and weathered in two colors, an incongruous pink and gray. He had a faint air of being surprised—which, God knows, he might well be—that life had gone so ill with him. The shape of his trousers was in itself a jest, so strangely were they bagged and raveled about his knees; and his coat was all bedaubed with clay as though he had lain in a rain-dub during the New Year's festivity. I will own I was not sorry to think he had had a merry New Year, and been young again for an evening; but I was sorry to see the mark still there. One could not expect such an old gentleman to be much of a dandy, or a great student of respectability in dress; but there might have been a wife at home, who had brushed out similar stains after fifty New Years, now become old, or a round-armed daughter, who would wish to have him neat, were it only out of self-respect and for the plowman sweetheart when he looks round at night. Plainly, there was nothing of this in his life, and years and loneliness hung heavily on his old arms. He was seventy-six, he told me; and nobody would give a day's work to a man that age: they would think he couldn't do it. "And, 'deed," he went on, with a sad little chuckle, "'deed, I doubt if I could." He said good-by to me at a footpath, and crippled wearily off to his work. It will make your heart ache if you think of his old fingers groping in the snow.

He told me I was to turn down beside the schoolhouse for Dunure. And so, when I found a lone house among the snow, and heard a babble of childish voices from within, I struck off into a steep road leading downward to the sea. Dunure lies close under the steep hill: a haven among the rocks, a breakwater in consummate disrepair, much apparatus for drying nets, and a score or so of fishers'

houses. Hard by, a few shards of ruined castle overhang the sea, a few vaults, and one tall gable honeycombed with windows. The snow lay on the beach to the tide-mark. It was daubed on to the sills of the ruin; it roosted in the crannies of the rock like white sea-birds; even on outlying reefs there would be a little cock of snow, like a toy lighthouse. Everything was gray and white in a cold and olorous sort of shepherd's plaid. In the profound silence, broken only by the noise of oars at sea, a horn was sounded twice; and I saw the postman, girt with two bags, pause a moment at the end of the clachan for letters. It is, perhaps, characteristic of Dunure that none were brought him.

The people at the public-house did not seem well pleased to see me, and though I would fain have stayed by the kitchen fire, sent me "ben the hoose" into the guest-room. This guest-room at Dunure was painted in quite esthetic fashion. There are rooms in the same taste not a hundred miles from London, where persons of an extreme sensibility meet together without embarrassment. It was all in a fine dull bottle-green and black; a grave harmonious piece of coloring, with nothing, so far as coarser folk can judge, to hurt the better feelings of the most exquisite purist. A cherry-red half window-blind kept up an imaginary warmth in the cold room, and threw quite a glow on the floor. Twelve cockle-shells and a halfpenny china figure were ranged solemnly along the mantel-shelf. Even the spittoon was an original note, and instead of sawdust contained sea-shells. And as for the hearth-rug, it would merit an article to itself, and a colored diagram to help the text. It was patchwork, but the patchwork of the poor: no glowing shreds of old brocade and Chinese silk, shaken together in the kaleidoscope of some tasteful housewife's fancy; but a work of art in its own way, and plainly a labor of love. The patches came exclusively from people's raiment. There was no color more brilliant than a heather mixture; "My Johnnie's gray breeks," well polished over the oar on the boat's thwart, entered largely into its composition. And the spoils of an old black cloth coat, that had been many a Sunday to church,

added something (save the mark!) of preciousness to the material.

While I was at luncheon four carters came in—long-limbed, muscular Ayrshire Scots, with lean, intelligent faces. Four quarts of stout were ordered; they kept filling the tumbler with the other hand as they drank; and in less time than it takes me to write these words the four quarts were finished—another round was proposed, discussed, and negatived—and they were creaking out of the village with their carts.

The ruins drew you toward them. You never saw any place more desolate from a distance, nor one that less belied its promise near at hand. Some crows and gulls flew away croaking as I scrambled in. The snow had drifted into the vaults. The clachan dabbled with snow, the white hills, the black sky, the sea marked in the coves with faint circular wrinkles, the whole world, as it looked from a loophole in Dunure, was cold, wretched, and out-at-elbows. If you had been a wicked baron and compelled to stay there all the afternoon, you would have had a rare fit of remorse. How you would have heaped up the fire and gnawed your fingers! I think it would have come to homicide before the evening—if it were only for the pleasure of seeing something red! And the masters of Dunure, it is to be noticed, were remarkable of old for inhumanity. One of these vaults where the snow had drifted was that "black voute" where "Mr. Alane Stewart, Commendatour of Crossraguel," endured his fiery trials. On the first and seventh of September, 1570 (ill dates for Mr. Alan!), Gilbert, Earl of Cassilis, his chaplain, his baker, his cook, his pantryman, and another servant, bound the poor Commendator "betwix an iron chimlay and a fire," and there cruelly roasted him until he signed away his abbacy. It is one of the ugliest stories of an ugly period, but not, somehow, without such a flavor of the ridiculous as makes it hard to sympathize quite seriously with the victim. And it is consoling to remember that he got away at last, and kept his abbacy, and, over and above, had a pension from the Earl until he died.

Some way beyond Dunure a wide bay, of somewhat less

unkindly aspect, opened out. Colzean plantations lay all along the steep shore, and there was a wooded hill toward the center, where the trees made a sort of shadowy etching over the snow. The road went down and up, and past a blacksmith's cottage that made fine music in the valley. Three compatriots of Burns drove up to me in a cart. They were all drunk, and asked me jeeringly if this was the way to Dunure. I told them it was; and my answer was received with unfeigned merriment. One gentleman was so much tickled he nearly fell out of the cart; indeed, he was only saved by a companion, who either had not so fine a sense of humor or had drunken less.

"The toune of Mayboll," says the inimitable Abercrummie,[1] "stands upon an ascending ground from east to west, and lyes open to the south. It hath one principall street, with houses upon both sides, built of freestone; and it is beautifyed with the situation of two castles, one at each end of this street. That on the east belongs to the Erle of Cassilis. On the west end is a castle, which belonged sometime to the laird of Blairquan, which is now the tolbuith, and is adorned with a pyremide [conical roof], and a row of ballesters round it raised from the top of the staircase, into which they have mounted a fyne clock. There be four lanes which pass from the principall street; one is called the Back Vennel, which is steep, declining to the southwest, and leads to a lower street, which is far larger than the high chiefe street, and it runs from the Kirkland to the Well Trees, in which there have been many pretty buildings, belonging to the severall gentry of the countrey, who were wont to resort thither in winter, and divert themselves in converse together at their owne houses. It was once the principall street of the town; but many of these houses of the gentry having been decayed and ruined, it has lost much of its ancient beautie. Just opposite to this vennel, there is another that leads northwest, from the chiefe street to the green, which is a pleasant plott of ground, enclosed round with an earthen wall, wherein they were wont to play football, but now at

[1] William Abercrombie. See *Fasti Ecclesiæ Scoticanæ*, under "Maybole" (Part iii.).

the Gowff and byasse-bowls. The houses of this towne, on both sides of the street, have their several gardens belonging to them; and in the lower street there be some pretty orchards, that yield store of good fruit." As Patterson says, this description is near enough even to-day, and is mighty nicely written to boot. I am bound to add, of my own experience, that Maybole is tumble-down and dreary. Prosperous enough in reality, it has an air of decay; and though the population has increased, a roofless house every here and there seems to protest the contrary. The women are more than well-favored, and the men fine, tall fellows; but they look slipshod and dissipated. As they slouched at street corners, or stood about gossiping in the snow, it seemed they would have been more at home in the slums of a large city than here in a country place betwixt a village and a town. I heard a great deal about drinking, and a great deal about religious revivals: two things in which the Scottish character is emphatic and most unlovely. In particular, I heard of clergymen who were employing their time in explaining to a delighted audience the physics of the Second Coming. It is not very likely any of us will be asked to help. If we were, it is likely we should receive instructions for the occasion, and that on more reliable authority. And so I can only figure to myself a congregation truly curious in such flights of theological fancy, as one of veteran and accomplished saints, who have fought the good fight to an end and outlived all worldly passion, and are to be regarded rather as a part of the Church Triumphant than the poor, imperfect company on earth. And yet I saw some young fellows about the smoking-room who seemed, in the eyes of one who can not count himself strait-laced, in need of some more practical sort of teaching. They seemed only eager to get drunk, and to do so speedily. It was not much more than a week after the New Year; and to hear them return on their past bouts with a gusto unspeakable was not altogether pleasing. Here is one snatch of talk, for the accuracy of which I can vouch—

"Ye had a spree here last Tuesday?"

"We had that!"

"I wasna able to be oot o' my bed. Man, I was awful bad on Wednesday."

"Ay, ye were gey bad."

And you should have seen the bright eyes, and heard the sensual accents! They recalled their doings with devout gusto and a sort of rational pride. Schoolboys, after their first drunkenness, are not more boastful; a cock does not plume himself with a more unmingled satisfaction as he paces forth among his harem; and yet these were grown men, and by no means short of wit. It was hard to suppose they were very eager about the Second Coming: it seemed as if some elementary notions of temperance for the men and seemliness for the women would have gone nearer the mark. And yet, as it seemed to me typical of much that is evil in Scotland, Maybole is also typical of much that is best. Some of the factories, which have taken the place of weaving in the town's economy, were originally founded and are still possessed by self-made men of the sterling, stout old breed—fellows who made some little bit of an invention, borrowed some little pocketful of capital, and then, step by step, in courage, thrift, and industry, fought their way upward to an assured position.

Abercrummie has told you enough of the Tolbooth; but, as a bit of spelling, this inscription on the Tolbooth bell seems too delicious to withhold: "This bell is founded at Maiboll Bi Danel Geli, a Frenchman, the 6th November, 1696, Bi appointment of the heritors of the parish of Maiyboll." The Castle deserves more notice. It is a large and shapely tower, plain from the ground upward, but with a zone of ornamentation running about the top. In a general way this adornment is perched on the very summit of the chimney-stacks; but there is one corner more elaborate than the rest. A very heavy string-course runs round the upper story, and just above this, facing up the street, the tower carries a small oriel window, fluted and corbeled and carved about with stone heads. It is so ornate it has somewhat the air of a shrine. And it was, indeed, the casket of a very precious jewel, for in the room to which it gives light lay, for long years, the heroine of the sweet old ballad of "Johnnie Faa"—she who, at the

call of the gipsies' songs, "came tripping down the stair, and all her maids before her." Some people say the ballad has no basis in fact, and have written, I believe, unanswerable papers to the proof. But in the face of all that, the very look of that high oriel window convinces the imagination, and we enter into all the sorrows of the imprisoned dame. We conceive the burden of the long, lack-luster days, when she leaned her sick head against the mullions, and saw the burghers loafing in Maybole High Street, and the children at play, and ruffling gallants riding by from hunt or foray. We conceive the passion of odd moments, when the wind threw up to her some snatch of song, and her heart grew hot within her, and her eyes overflowed at the memory of the past. And even if the tale be not true of this or that lady, or this or that old tower, it is true in the essence of all men and women: for all of us, some time or other, hear the gipsies singing; over all of us is the glamour cast. Some resist and sit resolutely by the fire. Most go and are brought back again, like Lady Cassilis. A few, of the tribe of Waring, go and are seen no more; only now and again, at springtime, when the gipsies' song is afloat in the amethyst evening, we can catch their voices in the glee.

By night it was clearer, and Maybole more visible than during the day. Clouds coursed over the sky in great masses; the full moon battled the other way, and lit up the snow with gleams of flying silver; the town came down the hill in a cascade of brown gables, bestridden by smooth white roofs, and spangled here and there with lighted windows. At either end the snow stood high up in the darkness, on the peak of the Tolbooth and among the chimneys of the Castle. As the moon flashed a bull's-eye glitter across the town between the racing clouds, the white roofs leaped into relief over the gables and the chimney-stacks, and their shadows over the white roofs. In the town itself the lit face of the clock peered down the street; an hour was hammered out on Mr. Geli's bell, and from behind the red curtains of a public-house some one strolled out—a compatriot of Burns, again!—"The saut tear blin's my e'e."

Next morning there were sun and a flapping wind. From the street corners of Maybole I could catch breezy glimpses of green fields. The road underfoot was wet and heavy—part ice, part snow, part water; and any one I met greeted me, by way of salutation, with "A fine thowe" (thaw). My way lay among rather bleak hills, and past bleak ponds and dilapidated castles and monasteries, to the Highland-looking village of Kirkoswald. It has little claim to notice, save that Burns came there to study surveying in the summer of 1777, and there also, in the kirkyard, the original of Tam o' Shanter sleeps his last sleep. It is worth noticing, however, that this was the first place I thought "Highland-looking." Over the hill from Kirkoswald a farm-road leads to the coast. As I came down above Turnberry, the sea view was indeed strangely different from the day before. The cold fogs were all blown away; and there was Ailsa Craig, like a refraction, magnified and deformed, of the Bass Rock; and there were the chiseled mountain tops of Arran, veined and tipped with snow; and behind, and fainter, the low, blue land of Cantyre. Cottony clouds stood, in a great castle, over the top of Arran, and blew out in long streamers to the south. The sea was bitten all over with white; little ships, tacking up and down the Firth, lay over at different angles in the wind. On Shanter they were plowing lea; a cart foal, all in a field by himself, capered and whinnied as if the spring were in him.

The road from Turnberry to Girvan lies along the shore, among sand-hills and by wildernesses of tumbled bent. Every here and there a few cottages stood together beside a bridge. They had one odd feature, not easy to describe in words: a triangular porch projected from above the door, supported at the apex by a single upright post; a secondary door was hinged to the post, and could be hasped on either cheek of the real entrance; so, whether the wind was north or south, the cotter could make himself a triangular bight of shelter where to set his chair and finish a pipe with comfort. There is one objection to this device: for, as the post stands in the middle of the fairway, any one precipitately issuing from the cottage must

run his chance of a broken head. So far as I am aware, it is peculiar to the little corner of country about Girvan. And that corner is noticeable for more reasons: it is certainly one of the most characteristic districts in Scotland. It has this movable porch by way of architecture; it has, as we shall see, a sort of remnant of provincial costume, and it has the handsomest population in the Lowlands. . . .

SCOTTISH RIVERS[1]

DR. JOHN BROWN calls this, in his pleasant preface to it, a delightful book; and Dr. John Brown is a good judge. A delightful book it certainly is, and delightful in no ordinary way. Although it is not thirty years since the author left it unfinished at his death, it is already in some sense an antiquity. The style is farther away from us than many styles older in date. There is throughout a sort of ponderous editorial levity, that has now gone somewhat into disuse. We are saluted as "gentle reader" and "gentlest of all readers." Social gossip about men and things and perpetual compliments to the nobility and gentry, by whose estates the river may chance to go, speak to us of a time when Scotland was to some extent a separate country and an author could address himself to a Scottish public, almost small enough to deserve the name of a clique and with a clique's special knowledge and special readiness to be pleased. In speaking to us as he does, we feel that the author is treating us as one of the family. His garrulousness has all the character of personal intercourse. We begin to regard his "old and much valued friend General Sir James Russel," as an old and much valued friend of our own; at least, we are sure the author would be glad to give us an introduction, not only to him, but to all the friends and acquaintances who come in his way, and so frank us, for a whole holiday, from one country house to another, all over Tweeddale and the valley of the Tyne.

This is just one of the qualities that make the book de-

[1] Scottish Rivers. By the late Sir Thomas Dick Lauder, Baronet, author of the "Morayshire Floods," etc. With Illustrations by the Author and a Preface by John Brown, M. D., author of "Rab and His Friends," etc. (Edinburgh: Edmonston & Douglas, 1874.)

lightful. It is in no literary sense, it is merely from the pleasure of making a lovable acquaintance and going through interesting scenery, that we can accord it merit. We have called the style editorial; indeed it is not unlike that of a provincial editor's description of the annual games, with just such little touches of personal compliment as the editor would deal out to his distinguished fellow townsmen and the various successful competitors. Now, at first sight, one would have thought that a book like this would depend almost entirely upon style; that a book which merely promises to set forth to us, with appropriate gossip, the changeful character of the valley of one river after another, if it failed in the point of vivid descriptive writing, would be a failure altogether. But we have a proof to the contrary before us. *Scottish Rivers* is a delightful book, in virtue of the delightful character of the author and the delightful character of his subject. It is all about things that are in themselves agreeable. The natural heart of man is made happy by hearing that the wild cattle of Ettrick Forest were *three times the size of those kept at Chillingham;* and all the more, perhaps, if we do not know what that was—there is the more rein for picturesque imagination. We should be very sorry for any one who did not care to hear about Thomas the Rhymer and the Black Dwarf; about border rievers, fugitive Jacobites, and hunted Covenanters. The breath of Walter Scott has gone out over these dry bones of old Scotch history; the work of imagination is done to our hand; and as we turn over these leaves, just as when we follow the actual course of the rivers themselves, we are accompanied by the pageant world of the Waverley Novels, and *Marmion,* and the *Lay of the Last Minstrel.*

Moreover, there is a great deal of quotation in the book; not only Scott, but all manner of old ballads and old songs take the tale, now and again, out of the mouth of the author; and the pages are pleasantly broken up and lightened with these snatches of verse. It is the fashion nowadays to run down this good old custom of quotation; we write prose so admirably, it seems, that these scraps would give even pain to the cultured reader, as an inter-

ruption to the sustained measure of the sentences. It may be so; but there is something to be said on the other side; and we greet some familiar passage when we find it in another man's book, like a friend in strange company.

The great point, however, in this book upon Scottish Rivers, is the sincerity of the author's own delight in the stories he repeats, the verses he quotes, the scenery and the animals he seeks to describe to us. It is by this sense of enjoyment that the whole book is kept alive. Sometimes it crops out in one way, sometimes in another; sometimes it is his passion for fishing that adds gusto to what he has to say of a place—as for example: "Below Kirkurd, the Tairth runs through a series of valuable water meadows, in a deep and uniform stream, resembling in character an English river; and," he adds, "we are much mistaken if it be not full of fine fat trouts." One can hear the smack of the lips, in these words. His whole past life has been so pleasant; he has such a host of sunny recollections, that the one jostles the other and they come tumbling forth together in a happy confusion: his basket is so full of those "fine fat trouts" of the memory, that it is a sight to see him empty it before us. Even fishing is passed by in superior ecstasies:

> "This is one of the most beautiful parts of the Tweed," he says, "and well do we remember the day when, wandering in our boyhood up hither from Melrose, we found ourselves for the first time in the midst of scenery so grand and beautiful. The rod was speedily put up, and the fly-hook was exchanged for the sketch-book. We wandered about from point to point, now and then reclining on the grass, and sometimes, from very wantonness, wading into the shallows of the dear stream; and so we passed away some hours of luxurious idleness, the pleasure of which we shall never cease to remember."

Is not that passage enough to convince the reader? He will find the book full of the like. He will find that this man, not very wise perhaps, certainly not very cunning in words, had a great faculty of pleasurable attention and pleasurable recollection, that he noticed things more closely than most of us, and liked them better, and that he could speak of what he thus observed and loved in a plain diffuse way that is full of gusto and most truly human.

And the last thing to be thought of, is that the book was written during the author's final illness. "What a place for linnets' nests and primroses in the lovely springtime of the year!" he exclaims, as the name Blackford Hill comes from under his pen. Would one not fancy he was a schoolboy with forty springtimes before him? It is easy, after this, to believe what Lord Cockburn said of him, that "his dying deserves to be remembered, for it reconciles one to the act."

A QUIET CORNER OF ENGLAND

"A BUILDING," says Mr. Champneys, "can never be like a picture, complete within the limits of its frame and independent of influences beyond. It must be studied upon its own site, and under all the conditions of history, landscape and neighborhood." We may amplify this idea a little, or rather put it in terms a little more general: The author wishes people to look at what they see with their eyes open, and not isolate special things artificially, and look at these only to the exclusion of the others. He is not one of those who say they are looking at a church when they are looking, in truth, at a church, complicated with a confusion of roofs and chimneys, connecting itself naturally with the sweep of the street that leads up to it, and relieved against the blue distance and the bright sky on the horizon. A building is a building, indeed, but it is much more. It makes or mars the landscape, it completes or nullifies the profile of a town upon a hilltop. I have in my eye two notable instances. In one, a block of high barracks, built in late days upon the battlements of an old citadel, falls admirably into harmony with the situation, and carries up into the sky-line the sentiment of the steep rock upon which the place is founded; so that, although a commonplace structure in itself, it has become the most impressive, and I had almost said the most romantic, feature of the pile. In the other, a monumental tower of some architectural pretensions has been put upon a poor little hill, the last buttress of a grand wall of mountains; and those

[1] A Quiet Corner of England: Studies of Landscape and Architecture in Winchelsea, Rye and the Romney Marsh. By Basil Champneys, B. A., Architect. With numerous Illustrations by Alfred Dawson. (London: Seeley, Jackson & Halliday, 1874.)

who remember the hill before it was thus burdened, the whole scene before it was thus burlesqued and stultified, can alone appreciate the evil that has been effected.

The most delicate shades of religion may be traced between the sentiment of a building and the sentiment of its surroundings. And in no place is this religion so delicate and amiable, at least for Englishmen, as in quiet corners of England, such as the one Mr. Champneys has set himself to realize for us. He was moved, he tells us, by "a jealous desire that the modest and homely landscape and architecture of our own country should receive more general appreciation." He has been justly irritated at that very pinchbeck and undiscriminating enthusiasm which inspires so many of the readers of the Continental Bradshaw and the followers after Mr. Cook.

> "Those," he says, "whose association with either landscape or art is more or less occasional, naturally find grandeur more effective than modesty, scale more easy to appreciate than sentiment. But such emotions as are engendered exclusively by gorgeous effects are apt to be sensational, and are neither so wholesome nor so enduring as those which arise in a homely atmosphere. Moreover, familiarity with the more specious is apt to render the more modest permanently insipid."

There is a great deal of truth in this, and yet I should be inclined to regard this exclusive preference for Alps and Pyramids as entirely exotic to the heart of Englishmen. If this tare has grown up among us, it is because an enemy came by night and sowed it—many enemies rather: the whole generation of small poets and small romantic travelers—and because better husbandmen have been remiss and let the good seed lie idle. And so we may have all hope of the ultimate success of books such as this, and the better spirit of which they are the sign. The English are a docile people in such matters: they will gladly learn from Mr. Champneys that there is a sentiment in Romney Marsh as well as in the Pyrenees; this acquisition will make it an easier task for some one else to prove to them the beauty of some other out-of-the-way corner or beaten track; and so line upon line, precept upon precept, they will become intelligently reconciled to the fashion of their

own country, and learn, perhaps, some more refined conception of natural loveliness than a very big hill of no particular shape with some white snow upon the top of it.

The district chosen by Mr. Champneys is one of somewhat romantic geographical conditions. Out of a bay on the old coast line, still strongly marked and easily recognizable for a coast line, the sea has gone back step by step, leaving behind it a great flat. This flat is Romney Marsh. The chief note of the district is its amphibiousness; and this is capitally realized for us in the book. Traces of the retiring waters are nowhere wanting. You can recognize what was once an island by the constrained grouping together of trees and houses; and what was once an estuary or lagoon, by bridges and stepping-stones now left high and dry forever. On the horizon, ships in full sail seem mixed together with stationary trees and haystacks.

"The more subtile effects," says Mr. Champneys, "are as those upon the sea. You see the storm gathering in the distance, and it sweeps over the equal ground self-contained, solid and detached, neither distorted nor delayed by any prominence; the wind blows steady and undiverted; and the countryman, who shows you a circuitous path to some distant object on the open plain, has some story to tell of former perils by sea. The farmers keep a few boats, and the retired sailors become farmers or farm laborers, and the old houses far inland are specially and elaborately planned for hiding smuggled goods. Moreover, the sea, though from the dead level it is actually unseen, is constantly present to the imagination as a haunting influence, and to the senses as a bright horizon of reflected light; and the seashore is marked here and there by a few whitewashed cottages and a flagstaff."

This is very good, and there is more of a like quality. Altogether, what with Mr. Champney's description and some of Mr. Dawson's illustrations—that, for instance, opposite page 12 and that at the foot of page 61—Romney Marsh becomes very distinct and familiar to our minds before we have finished the little volume.

Of the various buildings that are brought out for us against this background, the various bits of architectural detail criticized—architectural detail of all sorts and descriptions, down to the carpentry of certain prison doors at Rye, and a glazed cupboard from the inn at New Rom-

ney—I propose to say nothing. There is much to interest the reader: and here again some of Mr. Dawson's etchings are worthy of all praise. But one must avoid falling into the manner of those *critiques de critiques* that have stirred the scorn of Baudelaire, and many others who had a better right, perhaps, to be scornful in such a case. So, without entering into any of the more particular points here dealt with, it will be enough to say that all the criticism bears the stamp of strong personality. Mr. Champneys is no more open to all the pleasurable details of art than angry against those whom he considers as Art's banded enemies, and he is a very plain dealer when angry. Indeed, some of the most entertaining passages of the volume are those in which he has suffered his righteous indignation to carry him away, and refers with truculent irony to "the refined and interesting zeal of Protestantism," or regrets the rashness which led him to "anticipate that a Conservative Government would extend to our most valuable monuments some portion of that tenderness which it is supposed to show for abuses."

ORDERED SOUTH

BY A CURIOUS irony of fate, the places to which we are sent when health deserts us are often singularly beautiful. Often, too, they are places we have visited in former years, or seen briefly in passing by, and kept ever afterward in pious memory; and we please ourselves with the fancy that we shall repeat many vivid and pleasurable sensations, and take up again the thread of our enjoyment in the same spirit as we let it fall. We shall now have an opportunity of finishing many pleasant excursions, interrupted of yore before our curiosity was fully satisfied. It may be that we have kept in mind, during all these years, the recollection of some valley into which we have just looked down for a moment before we lost sight of it in the disorder of the hills; it may be that we have lain awake at night, and agreeably tantalized ourselves with the thought of corners we had never turned, or summits we had all but climbed: we shall now be able, as we tell ourselves, to complete all these unfinished pleasures, and pass beyond the barriers that confined our recollections.

The promise is so great, and we are all so easily led away when hope and memory are both in one story, that I dare say the sick man is not very inconsolable when he receives sentence of banishment, and is inclined to regard his ill-health as not the least fortunate accident of his life. Nor is he immediately undeceived. The stir and speed of the journey, and the restlessness that goes to bed with him as he tries to sleep between two days of noisy progress, fever him, and stimulate his dull nerves into something of their old quickness and sensibility. And so he can enjoy the faint autumnal splendor of the landscape, as he sees hill and plain, vineyard and forest, clad in one wonderful

glory of fairy gold, which the first great winds of winter will transmute, as in the fable, into withered leaves. And so too he can enjoy the admirable brevity and simplicity of such little glimpses of country and country ways as flash upon him through the windows of the train; little glimpses that have a character all their own; sights seen as a traveling swallow might see them from the wing, or Iris as she went abroad over the land on some Olympian errand. Here and there, indeed, a few children huzzah and wave their hands to the express; but for the most part, it is an interruption too brief and isolated to attract much notice; the sheep do not cease from browsing; a girl sits balanced on the projecting tiller of a canal boat, so precariously that it seems as if a fly or the splash of a leaping fish would be enough to overthrow the dainty equilibrium, and yet all these hundreds of tons of coal and wood and iron have been precipitated roaring past her very ear, and there is not a start, not a tremor, not a turn of the averted head, to indicate that she has been even conscious of its passage. Herein, I think, lies the chief attraction of railway travel. The speed is so easy, and the train disturbs so little the scenes through which it takes us, that our heart becomes full of the placidity and stillness of the country; and while the body is borne forward in the flying chain of carriages, the thoughts alight, as the humor moves them, at unfrequented stations; they make haste up the poplar alley that leads toward the town; they are left behind with the signalman as, shading his eyes with his hand, he watches the long train sweep away into the golden distance.

Moreover, there is still before the invalid the shock of wonder and delight with which he will learn that he has passed the indefinable line that separates South from North. And this is an uncertain moment; for sometimes the consciousness is forced upon him early, on the occasion of some slight association, a color, a flower, or a scent; and sometimes not until, one fine morning, he wakes up with the southern sunshine peeping through the *persiennes,* and the southern patois confusedly audible below the windows. Whether it come early or late, however, this pleas-

ure will not end with the anticipation, as do so many others of the same family. It will leave him wider awake than it found him, and give a new significance to all he may see for many days to come. There is something in the mere name of the South that carries enthusiasm along with it. At the sound of the word, he pricks up his ears; he becomes as anxious to seek out beauties and to get by heart the permanent lines and character of the landscape, as if he had been told that it was all his own—an estate out of which he had been kept unjustly, and which he was now to receive in free and full possession. Even those who have never been there before feel as if they had been; and everybody goes comparing, and seeking for the familiar, and finding it with such ecstasies of recognition, that one would think they were coming home after a weary absence, instead of traveling hourly farther abroad.

It is only after he is fairly arrived and settled down in his chosen corner, that the invalid begins to understand the change that has befallen him. Everything about him is as he had remembered, or as he had anticipated. Here, at his feet, under his eyes, are the olive gardens and the blue sea. Nothing can change the eternal magnificence of form of the naked Alps behind Mentone; nothing, not even the crude curves of the railway, can utterly deform the suavity of contour of one bay after another along the whole reach of the Riviera. And of all this, he has only a cold head knowledge that is divorced from enjoyment. He recognizes with his intelligence that this thing and that thing is beautiful, while in his heart of hearts he has to confess that it is not beautiful for him. It is in vain that he spurs his discouraged spirit; in vain that he chooses out points of view, and stands there, looking with all his eyes, and waiting for some return of the pleasure that he remembers in other days, as the sick folk may have awaited the coming of the angel at the pool of Bethesda. He is like an enthusiast leading about with him a stolid, indifferent tourist. There is some one by who is out of sympathy with the scene, and is not moved up to the measure of the occasion; and that some one is himself. The world

is disenchanted for him. He seems to himself to touch things with muffled hands, and to see them through a veil. His life becomes a palsied fumbling after notes that are silent when he has found and struck them. He can not recognize that this phlegmatic and unimpressionable body with which he now goes burdened, is the same that he knew heretofore so quick and delicate and alive.

He is tempted to lay the blame on the very softness and amenity of the climate, and to fancy that in the rigors of the winter at home, these dead emotions would revive and flourish. A longing for the brightness and silence of fallen snow seizes him at such times. He is homesick for the hale rough weather; for the tracery of the forest upon his window-panes at morning, the reluctant descent of the first flakes, and the white roofs relieved against the somber sky. And yet the stuff of which these yearnings are made, is of the flimsiest: if but the thermometer fall a little below its ordinary Mediterranean level, or a wind come down from the snow-clad Alps behind, the spirit of his fancies changes upon the instant, and many a doleful vignette of the grim wintry streets at home returns to him, and begins to haunt his memory. The hopeless, huddled attitude of tramps in doorways; the flinching gait of barefoot children on the icy pavement; the sheen of the rainy streets toward afternoon; the meager anatomy of the poor defined by the clinging of wet garments; the high canorous note of the Northeaster on days when the very houses seem to stiffen with cold: these, and such as these, crowd back upon him, and mockingly substitute themselves for the fanciful winter scenes with which he had pleased himself a while before. He can not be glad enough that he is where he is. If only the others could be there also; if only those tramps could lie down for a little in the sunshine, and those children warm their feet, this once, upon a kindlier earth; if only there were no cold anywhere, and no nakedness, and no hunger; if only it were as well with all men as it is with him!

For it is not altogether ill with the invalid, after all. If it is only rarely that anything penetrates vividly into his numbed spirit, yet, when anything does, it brings with it a

joy that is all the more poignant for its very rarity. There is something pathetic in these occasional returns of a glad activity of heart. In his lowest hours he will be stirred and awakened by many such; and they will spring perhaps from very trivial sources; as a friend once said to me, the "spirit of delight" comes often on small wings. For the pleasure that we take in beautiful nature is essentially capricious. It comes sometimes when we least look for it; and sometimes, when we expect it most certainly, it leaves us to gape joylessly for days together, in the very home-land of the beautiful. We may have passed a place a thousand times and one; and on the thousand and second it will be transfigured, and stand forth in a certain splendor of reality from the dull circle of surroundings; so that we see it "with a child's first pleasure," as Wordsworth saw the daffodils by the lake side. And if this falls out capriciously with the healthy, how much more so with the invalid. Some day he will find his first violet, and be lost in pleasant wonder, by what alchemy the cold earth of the clods, and the vapid air and rain, can be transmuted into color so rich and odor so touchingly sweet. Or perhaps he may see a group of washerwomen relieved, on a spit of shingle, against the blue sea, or a meeting of flower gatherers in the tempered daylight of an olive garden; and something significant or monumental in the grouping, something in the harmony of faint color that is always characteristic of the dress of these southern women, will come home to him unexpectedly, and awake in him that satisfaction with which we tell ourselves that we are the richer by one more beautiful experience. Or it may be something even slighter: as when the opulence of the sunshine, which somehow gets lost and fails to produce its effect on the large scale, is suddenly revealed to him by the chance isolation—as he changes the position of his sunshade—of a yard or two of roadway with its stones and weeds. And then, there is no end to the infinite variety of the olive-yards themselves. Even the color is indeterminate and continually shifting: now you would say it was green, now gray, now blue; now tree stands above tree, like "cloud on cloud," massed into filmy indistinctness; and

sufficiency of his own supply. Thus there remain unaltered all the disinterested hopes for mankind and a better future which have been the solace and inspiration of his life. These he has set beyond the reach of any fate that only menaces himself; and it makes small difference whether he die five thousand years, or five thousand and fifty years, before the good epoch for which he faithfully labors. He has not deceived himself; he has known from the beginning that he followed the pillar of fire and cloud, only to perish himself in the wilderness, and that it was reserved for others to enter joyfully into possession of the land. And so, as everything grows grayer and quieter about him, and slopes toward extinction, these unfaded visions accompany his sad decline, and follow him, with friendly voices and hopeful words, into the very vestibule of death. The desire of love or fame scarcely moved him, in his days of health, more strongly than these generous aspirations move him now; and so life is carried forward beyond life, and a vista kept open for the eyes of hope, even when his hands grope already on the face of the impassable.

Lastly, he is bound tenderly to life by the thought of his friends; or shall we not say rather, that by their thought for him, by their unchangeable solicitude and love, he remains woven into the very stuff of life, beyond the power of bodily dissolution to undo? In a thousand ways will he survive and be perpetuated. Much of Etienne de la Boetie survived during all the years in which Montaigne continued to converse with him on the pages of the ever-delightful essays. Much of what was truly Goethe was dead already when he revisited places that knew him no more, and found no better consolation than the promise of his own verses, that soon he too would be at rest. Indeed, when we think of what it is that we most seek and cherish, and find most pride and pleasure in calling ours, it will sometimes seem to us as if our friends, at our decease, would suffer loss more truly than ourselves. As a monarch who should care more for the outlying colonies he knows on the map or through the report of his vicegerents, than for the trunk of his empire under

his eyes at home, are we not more concerned about the shadowy life that we have in the hearts of others, and that portion in their thoughts and fancies which, in a certain far-away sense, belongs to us, than about the real knot of our identity—that central metropolis of self, of which alone we are immediately aware—or the diligent service of arteries and veins and infinitesimal activity of ganglia, which we know (as we know a proposition in Euclid) to be the source and substance of the whole? At the death of every one whom we love, some fair and honorable portion of our existence falls away, and we are dislodged from one of these dear provinces; and they are not, perhaps, the most fortunate who survive a long series of such impoverishments, till their life and influence narrow gradually into the meager limit of their own spirits, and death, when he comes at last, can destroy them at one blow.

Note.—To this essay I must in honesty append a word or two of qualification; for this is one of the points on which a slightly greater age teaches us a slightly different wisdom:

A youth delights in generalities, and keeps loose from particular obligations; he jogs on the footpath way, himself pursuing butterflies, but courteously lending his applause to the advance of the human species and the coming of the kingdom of justice and love. As he grows older, he begins to think more narrowly of man's action in the general, and perhaps more arrogantly of his own in the particular. He has not that same unspeakable trust in what he would have done had he been spared, seeing finally that that would have been little; but he has a far higher notion of the blank that he will make by dying. A young man feels himself one too many in the world; his is a painful situation: he has no calling; no obvious utility; no ties, but to his parents, and these he is sure to disregard. I do not think that a proper allowance has been made for this true cause of suffering in youth; but by the mere fact of a prolonged existence, we outgrow either the fact or else the feeling. Either we become so callously accustomed to our own useless figure in the world, or else—and this, thank God, in the majority of cases—we so collect about us the interest or the love of our fellows, so multiply our effective part in the affairs of life, that we need to entertain no longer the question of our right to be.

And so in the majority of cases, a man who fancies himself dying, will get cold comfort from the very youthful view expressed in this essay. He, as a living man, has some to help, some to love, some to correct; it may be, some to punish. These duties cling, not upon humanity, but upon the man himself. It is he, not another, who is one woman's son and a second woman's husband and a third woman's father. That life which began so small, has now grown, with a myriad filaments, into the lives of others. It is not indispensable; another will take the place and shoulder the discharged responsibility; but the better the man and the nobler his purposes, the more will he be tempted to regret the extinction of his powers and the deletion of his personality. To have lived a generation, is not only to have grown at home in that perplexing medium, but to have assumed innumerable duties. To die at such an age, has, for all but the entirely base, something of the air of a betrayal. A man does not only reflect upon what he might have done in a

future that is never to be his; but beholding himself so early a deserter from the fight, he eats his heart for the good he might have done already. To have been so useless and now to lose all hope of being useful any more—there it is that death and memory assail him. And even if mankind shall go on, founding heroic cities, practising heroic virtues, rising steadily from strength to strength; even if his work shall be fulfilled, his friends consoled, his wife remarried by a better than he; how shall this alter, in one jot, his estimation of a career which was his only business in this world, which was so fitfully pursued, and which is now so ineffectively to end?

WALKING TOURS

IT MUST not be imagined that a walking tour, as some would have us fancy, is merely a better or worse way of seeing the country. There are many ways of seeing landscape quite as good; and none more vivid, in spite of canting dilettantes, than from a railway train. But landscape on a walking tour is quite accessory. He who is indeed of the brotherhood does not voyage in quest of the picturesque, but of certain jolly humors—of the hope and spirit with which the march begins at morning, and the peace and spiritual repletion of the evening's rest. He can not tell whether he puts his knapsack on, or takes it off, with more delight. The excitement of the departure puts him in key for that of the arrival. Whatever he does is not only a reward in itself, but will be further rewarded in the sequel; and so pleasure leads on to pleasure in an endless chain. It is this that so few can understand; they will either be always lounging or always at five miles an hour; they do not play off the one against the other, prepare all day for the evening, and all evening for the next day. And, above all, it is here that your overwalker fails of comprehension. His heart rises against those who drink their curaçoa in liqueur glasses, when he himself can swill it in a brown john. He will not believe that the flavor is more delicate in the smaller dose. He will not believe that to walk this unconscionable distance is merely to stupefy and brutalize himself, and come to his inn, at night, with a sort of frost on his five wits, and a starless night of darkness in his spirit. Not for him the mild luminous evening of the temperate walker! He has nothing left of man but a physical need for bedtime and a double nightcap; and even his pipe, if he be a smoker, will be savorless and disenchanted. It is the fate of such

an one to take twice as much trouble as is needed to obtain happiness, and miss the happiness in the end; he is the man of the proverb, in short, who goes further and fares worse.

Now, to be properly enjoyed, a walking tour should be gone upon alone. If you go in a company, or even in pairs, it is no longer a walking tour in anything but name; it is something else and more in the nature of a picnic. A walking tour should be gone upon alone, because freedom is of the essence; because you should be able to stop and go on, and follow this way or that, as the freak takes you; and because you must have your own pace, and neither trot alongside a champion walker, nor mince in time with a girl. And then you must be open to all impressions and let your thoughts take color from what you see. You should be as a pipe for any wind to play upon. "I can not see the wit," says Hazlitt, "of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country I wish to vegetate like the country,"—which is the gist of all that can be said upon the matter. There should be no cackle of voices at your elbow, to jar on the meditative silence of the morning. And so long as a man is reasoning he can not surrender himself to that fine intoxication that comes of much motion in the open air, that begins in a sort of dazzle and sluggishness of the brain, and ends in a peace that passes comprehension.

During the first day or so of any tour there are moments of bitterness, when the traveler feels more than coldly toward his knapsack, when he is half in a mind to throw it bodily over the hedge and, like Christian on a similar occasion, "give three leaps and go on singing." And yet it soon acquires a property of easiness. It becomes magnetic; the spirit of the journey enters into it. And no sooner have you passed the straps over your shoulder than the lees of sleep are cleared from you, you pull yourself together with a shake, and fall at once into your stride. And surely, of all possible moods, this, in which a man takes the road, is the best. Of course, if he *will* keep thinking of his anxieties, if he *will* open the merchant Abudah's chest and walk arm in arm with the hag—why,

wherever he is, and whether he walk fast or slow, the chances are that he will not be happy. And so much the more shame to himself! There are perhaps thirty men setting forth at that same hour, and I would lay a large wager there is not another dull face among the thirty. It would be a fine thing to follow, in a coat of darkness, one after another of these wayfarers, some summer morning, for the first few miles upon the road. This one, who walks fast, with a keen look in his eyes, is all concentrated in his own mind; he is up at his loom, weaving and weaving, to set the landscape to words. This one peers about, as he goes, among the grasses; he waits by the canal to watch the dragon-flies; he leans on the gate of the pasture, and can not look enough upon the complacent kine. And here comes another, talking, laughing, and gesticulating to himself. His face changes from time to time, as indignation flashes from his eyes or anger clouds his forehead. He is composing articles, delivering orations, and conducting the most impassioned interviews, by the way. A little farther on, and it is as like as not he will begin to sing. And well for him, supposing him to be no great master in that art, if he stumble across no stolid peasant at a corner; for on such an occasion, I scarcely know which is the more troubled, or whether it is worse to suffer the confusion of your troubadour, or the unfeigned alarm of your clown. A sedentary population, accustomed, besides, to the strange mechanical bearing of the common tramp, can in no wise explain to itself the gaiety of these passers-by. I knew one man who was arrested as a runaway lunatic, because, although a full-grown person with a red beard, he skipped as he went like a child. And you would be astonished if I were to tell you all the grave and learned heads who have confessed to me that, when on walking tours, they sang—and sang very ill—and had a pair of red ears when, as described above, the inauspicious peasant plumped into their arms from round a corner. And here, lest you should think I am exaggerating, is Hazlitt's own confession, from his essay *On Going a Journey,* which is so good that there should be a tax levied on all who have not read it:

"Give me the clear blue sky over my head," says he, "and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hours' march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I can not start some game on these lone heaths. I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy."

Bravo! After that adventure of my friend with the policeman, you would not have cared, would you, to publish that in the first person? But we have no bravery nowadays, and, even in books, must all pretend to be as dull and foolish as our neighbors. It was not so with Hazlitt. And notice how learned he is (as, indeed, throughout the essay) in the theory of walking tours. He is none of your athletic young men in purple stockings, who walk their fifty miles a day: three hours' march is his ideal. And then he must have a winding road, the epicure!

Yet there is one thing I object to in these words of his, one thing in the great master's practise that seems to me not wholly wise. I do not approve of that leaping and running. Both of these hurry the respiration; they both shake up the brain out of its glorious open-air confusion; and they both break the pace. Uneven walking is not so agreeable to the body, and it distracts and irritates the mind. Whereas, when once you have fallen into an equable stride, it requires no conscious thought from you to keep it up, and yet it prevents you from thinking earnestly of anything else. Like knitting, like the work of a copying clerk, it gradually neutralizes and sets to sleep the serious activity of the mind. We can think of this or that, lightly and laughingly, as a child thinks, or as we think in a morning doze; we can make puns or puzzle out acrostics, and trifle in a thousand ways with words and rimes; but when it comes to honest work, when we come to gather ourselves together for an effort, we may sound the trumpet as loud and long as we please; the great barons of the mind will not rally to the standard, but sit, each one, at home, warming his hands over his own fire and brooding on his own private thought!

In the course of a day's walk, you see, there is much variance in the mood. From the exhilaration of the start,

to the happy phlegm of the arrival, the change is certainly great. As the day goes on, the traveler moves from the one extreme toward the other. He becomes more and more incorporated with the material landscape, and the open-air drunkenness grows upon him with great strides, until he posts along the road, and sees everything about him as in a cheerful dream. The first is certainly brighter, but the second stage is the more peaceful. A man does not make so many articles toward the end, nor does he laugh aloud; but the purely animal pleasures, the sense of physical well-being, the delight of every inhalation, of every time the muscles tighten down the thigh, console him for the absence of the others, and bring him to his destination still content.

Nor must I forget to say a word on bivouacs. You come to a mile-stone on a hill, or some place where deep ways meet under trees; and off goes the knapsack, and down you sit to smoke a pipe in the shade. You sink into yourself, and the birds come round and look at you; and your smoke dissipates upon the afternoon under the blue dome of heaven; and the sun lies warm upon your feet, and the cool air visits your neck and turns aside your open shirt. If you are not happy, you must have an evil conscience. You may dally as long as you like by the roadside. It is almost as if the millennium were arrived, when we shall throw our clocks and watches over the housetop, and remember time and seasons no more. Not to keep hours for a lifetime is, I was going to say, to live forever.

You have no idea, unless you have tried it, how endlessly long is a summer's day, that you measure out only by hunger, and bring to an end only when you are drowsy. I know a village where there are hardly any clocks, where no one knows more of the days of the week than by a sort of instinct for the fête on Sundays, and where only one person can tell you the day of the month, and she is generally wrong; and if people were aware how slow Time journeyed in that village, and what armfuls of spare hours he gives, over and above the bargain, to its wise inhabitants, I believe there would be a stampede out of London,

Liverpool, Paris, and a variety of large towns, where the clocks lose their heads, and shake the hours out each one faster than the other, as though they were all in a wager. And all these foolish pilgrims would each bring his own misery along with him, in a watch-pocket! It is to be noticed, there were no clocks and watches in the much-vaunted days before the flood. It follows, of course, there were no appointments, and punctuality was not yet thought upon. "Though ye take from a covetous man all his treasure," says Milton, "he has yet one jewel left; ye can not deprive him of his covetousness." And so I would say of a modern man of business, you may do what you will for him, put him in Eden, but give him the elixir of life—he has still a flaw at heart, he still has his business habits. Now, there is no time when business habits are more mitigated than on a walking tour. And so during these halts, as I say, you will feel almost free.

But it is at night, and after dinner, that the best hour comes. There are no such pipes to be smoked as those that follow a good day's march; the flavor of the tobacco is a thing to be remembered, it is so dry and aromatic, so full and so fine. If you wind up the evening with grog, you will own there was never such grog; at every sip a jocund tranquillity spreads about your limbs, and sits easily in your heart. If you read a book—and you will never do so save by fits and starts—you find the language strangely racy and harmonious; words take a new meaning; single sentences possess the ear for half an hour together; and the writer endears himself to you, at every page, by the nicest concidence of sentiment. It seems as if it were a book you had written yourself in a dream. To all we have read on such occasions we look back with special favor. "It was on the 10th of April, 1798," says Hazlitt, with amorous precision, "that I sat down to a volume of the new *Héloïse,* at the Inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken." I should wish to quote more, for though we are mighty fine fellows nowadays, we can not write like Hazlitt. And, talking of that, a volume of Hazlitt's essays would be a capital pocket-book on such a journey; so would a volume of

Heine's songs; and for *Tristram Shandy* I can pledge a fair experience.

If the evening be fine and warm, there is nothing better in life than to lounge before the inn door in the sunset, or lean over the parapet of the bridge, to watch the weeds and the quick fishes. It is then, if ever, that you taste Joviality to the full significance of that audacious word. Your muscles are so agreeably slack, you feel so clean and so strong and so idle, that whether you move or sit still, whatever you do is done with pride and a kingly sort of pleasure. You fall in talk with any one, wise or foolish, drunk or sober. And it seems as if a hot walk purged you, more than of anything else, of all narrowness and pride, and left curiosity to play its part freely, as in a child or a man of science. You lay aside all your own hobbies, to watch provincial humors develop themselves before you, now as a laughable farce, and now grave and beautiful like an old tale.

Or perhaps you are left to your own company for the night, and surly weather imprisons you by the fire. You may remember how Burns, numbering past pleasures, dwells upon the hours when he has been "happy thinking." It is a phrase that may well perplex a poor modern, girt about on every side by clocks and chimes, and haunted, even at night, by flaming dial-plates. For we are all so busy, and have so many far-off projects to realize, and castles in the fire to turn into solid habitable mansions on a gravel soil, that we can find no time for pleasure trips into the Land of Thought and among the Hills of Vanity. Changed times, indeed, when we must sit all night, beside the fire, with folded hands; and a changed world for most of us, when we find we can pass the hours without discontent, and be happy thinking. We are in such haste to be doing, to be writing, to be gathering gear, to make our voice audible a moment in the derisive silence of eternity, that we forget that one thing, of which these are but the parts—namely, to live. We fall in love, we drink hard, we run to and fro upon the earth like frightened sheep. And now you are to ask yourself if, when all is done, you would not have been better to sit by the fire

at home, and be happy thinking. To sit still and contemplate,—to remember the faces of women without desire, to be pleased by the great deeds of men without envy, to be everything and everywhere in sympathy, and yet content to remain where and what you are—is not this to know both wisdom and virtue, and to dwell with happiness? After all, it is not they who carry flags, but they who look upon it from a private chamber, who have the fun of the procession. And once you are at that, you are in the very humor of all social heresy. It is no time for shuffling, or for big, empty words. If you ask yourself what you mean by fame, riches, or learning, the answer is far to seek; and you go back into that kingdom of light imaginations, which seems so vain in the eyes of Philistines perspiring after wealth, and so momentous to those who are stricken with the disproportions of the world, and, in the face of the gigantic stars, can not stop to split differences between two degrees of the infinitesimally small, such as a tobacco pipe or the Roman Empire, a million of money or a fiddlestick's end.

You lean from the window, your last pipe reeking whitely into the darkness, your body full of delicious pains, your mind enthroned in the seventh circle of content; when suddenly the mood changes, the weathercock goes about, and you ask yourself one question more: whether, for the interval, you have been the wisest philosopher or the most egregious of donkeys? Human experience is not yet able to reply; but at least you have had a fine moment, and looked down upon all the kingdoms of the earth. And whether it was wise or foolish, to-morrow's travel will carry you, body and mind, into some different parish of the infinite.

THE DAY AFTER TO-MORROW

HISTORY is much decried; it is a tissue of errors, we are told, no doubt correctly; and rival historians expose each other's blunders with gratification. Yet the worst historian has a clearer view of the period he studies than the best of us can hope to form of that in which we live. The obscurest epoch is to-day; and that for a thousand reasons of inchoate tendency, conflicting report, and sheer mass and multiplicity of experience; but chiefly, perhaps, by reason of an insidious shifting of landmarks. Parties and ideas continually move, but not by measurable marches on a stable course; the political soil itself steals forth by imperceptible degrees, like a traveling glacier, carrying on its bosom not only political parties but their flag-posts and cantonments; so that what appears to be an eternal city founded on hills is but a flying island of Laputa. It is for this reason in particular that we are all becoming Socialists without knowing it; by which I would not in the least refer to the acute case of Mr. Hyndman and his horn-blowing supporters, sounding their trumps of a Sunday within the walls of our individualist Jericho—but to the stealthy change that has come over the spirit of Englishmen and English legislation. A little while ago, and we were still for liberty; "crowd a few more thousands on the bench of Government," we seemed to cry; "keep her head direct on liberty, and we can not help but come to port." This is over; *laissez-faire* declines in favor; our legislation grows authoritative, grows philanthropical, bristles with new duties and new penalties, and casts a spawn of inspectors, who now begin, note-book in hand, to darken the face of England. It may be right or wrong, we are

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not trying that; but one thing is beyond doubt: it is Socialism in action, and the strange thing is that we scarcely know it.

Liberty has served us a long while, and it may be time to seek new altars. Like all other principles, she has been proved to be self-exclusive in the long run. She has taken wages beside (like all other virtues) and dutifully served Mammon; so that many things we were accustomed to admire as the benefits of freedom and common to all, were truly benefits of wealth, and took their value from our neighbors' poverty. A few shocks of logic, a few disclosures (in the journalistic phrase) of what the freedom of manufacturers, landlords, or ship owners may imply for operatives, tenants or seamen, and we not unnaturally begin to turn to that other pole of hope, beneficent tyranny. Freedom, to be desirable, involves kindness, wisdom, and all the virtues of the free; but the free man as we have seen him in action has been, as of yore, only the master of many helots; and the slaves are still ill-fed, ill-clad, ill-taught, ill-housed, insolently entreated, and driven to their mines and workshops by the lash of famine. So much, in other men's affairs, we have begun to see clearly; we have begun to despair of virtue in these other men, and from our seat in Parliament begin to discharge upon them, thick as arrows, the host of our inspectors. The landlord has long shaken his head over the manufacturer; those who do business on land have lost all trust in the virtues of the ship owner; the professions look askance upon the retail traders and have even started their cooperative stores to ruin them; and from out the smoke wreaths of Birmingham a finger has begun to write upon the wall the condemnation of the landlord. Thus, piece by piece, do we condemn each other, and yet not perceive the conclusion, that our whole estate is somewhat damnable. Thus, piece by piece, each acting against his neighbor, each sawing away the branch on which some other interest is seated, do we apply in detail our Socialistic remedies, and yet not perceive that we are all laboring together to bring in Socialism at large. A tendency so stupid and so selfish is like to prove invincible; and if Socialism be at

all a practicable rule of life, there is every chance that our grandchildren will see the day and taste the pleasures of existence in something far liker an ant-heap than any previous human polity. And this not in the least because of the voice of Mr. Hyndman or the horns of his followers; but by the mere glacier movement of the political soil, bearing forward on its bosom, apparently undisturbed, the proud camps of Whig and Tory. If Mr. Hyndman were a man of keen humor, which is far from my conception of his character, he might rest from his troubling and look on: the walls of Jericho begin to crumble and dissolve. That great servile war, the Armageddon of money and numbers, to which we looked forward when young, becomes more and more unlikely; and we may rather look to see a peaceable and blindfold evolution, the work of dull men immersed in political tactics and dead to political results.

The principal scene of this comedy lies, of course, in the House of Commons; it is there, besides, that the details of this new evolution (if it proceed) will fall to be decided; so that the state of Parliament is not only diagnostic of the present but fatefully prophetic of the future. Well, we all know what Parliament is, and we are all ashamed of it. We may pardon it some faults, indeed, on the ground of Irish obstruction—a bitter trial, which it supports with notable good humor. But the excuse is merely local; it can not apply to similar bodies in America and France; and what are we to say of these? President Cleveland's letter may serve as a picture of the one; a glance at almost any paper will convince us of the weakness of the other. Decay appears to have seized on the organ of popular government in every land; and this just at the moment when we begin to bring to it, as to an oracle of justice, the whole skein of our private affairs to be unraveled, and ask it, like a new Messiah, to take upon itself our frailties and play for us the part that should be played by our own virtues. For that, in few words, is the case. We can not trust ourselves to behave with decency; we can not trust our consciences; and the remedy proposed is to elect a round number of our neighbors, pretty

much at random, and say to these: "Be ye our conscience; make laws so wise, and continue from year to year to administer them so wisely, that they shall save us from ourselves and make us righteous and happy, world without end. Amen." And who can look twice at the British Parliament and then seriously bring it such a task? I am not advancing this as an argument against Socialism: once again, nothing is further from my mind. There are great truths in Socialism, or no one, not even Mr. Hyndman, would be found to hold it; and if it came, and did one-tenth part of what it offers, I for one should make it welcome. But if it is to come, we may as well have some notion of what it will be like; and the first thing to grasp is that our new polity will be designed and administered (to put it courteously) with something short of inspiration. It will be made, or will grow, in a human parliament; and the one thing that will not very hugely change is human nature. The Anarchists think otherwise, from which it is only plain that they have not carried to the study of history the lamp of human sympathy.

Given, then, our new polity, with its new wagon load of laws, what headmarks must we look for in this life? We chafe a good deal at that excellent thing, the income tax, because it brings into our affairs the prying fingers, and exposes us to the tart words, of the official. The official, in all degrees, is already something of a terror to many of us. I would not willingly have to do with even a police constable in any other spirit than that of kindness. I still remember in my dreams the eye-glass of a certain *attaché* at a certain embassy — an eye-glass that was a standing indignity to all on whom it looked; and my next most disagreeable remembrance is of a bracing, Republican postman in the city of San Francisco. I lived in that city among working folk, and what my neighbors accepted at the postman's hands—nay, what I took from him myself—it is still distasteful to recall. The *bourgeois,* residing in the upper parts of society, has but few opportunities of tasting this peculiar bowl; but about the income tax, as I have said, or perhaps about a patent, or in the halls of an embassy at the hands of my friend of

the eye-glass, he occasionally sets his lips to it; and he may thus imagine (if he has that faculty of imagination, without which most faculties are void) how it tastes to his poorer neighbors, who must drain it to the dregs. In every contact with authority, with their employer, with the police, with the School Board officer, in the hospital, or in the workhouse, they have equally the occasion to appreciate the light-hearted civility of the man in office; and as an experimentalist in several out-of-the-way provinces of life, I may say it has but to be felt to be appreciated. Well, this golden age of which we are speaking will be the golden age of officials. In all our concerns it will be their beloved duty to meddle, with what tact, with what obliging words, analogy will aid us to imagine. It is likely these gentlemen will be periodically elected; they will therefore have their turn of being underneath, which does not always sweeten men's conditions. The laws they will have to administer will be no clearer than those we know to-day, and the body which is to regulate their administration no wiser than the British Parliament. So that upon all hands we may look for a form of servitude most galling to the blood—servitude to many and changing masters, and for all the slights that accompany the rule of jack-in-office. And if the Socialistic program be carried out with the least fulness, we shall have lost a thing, in most respects not much to be regretted, but as a moderator of oppression, a thing nearly invaluable—the newspaper. For the independent journal is a creature of capital and competition; it stands and falls with millionaires and railway bonds and all the abuses and glories of to-day; and as soon as the State has fairly taken its bent to authority and philanthropy, and laid the least touch on private property, the days of the independent journal are numbered. State railways may be good things and so may State bakeries; but a State newspaper will never be a very trenchant critic of the State officials.

But, again, these officials would have no sinecure. Crime would perhaps be less, for some of the motives of crime we may suppose would pass away. But if Socialism were carried out with any fulness, there would be more con-

traventions. We see already new sins springing up like mustard—School Board sins, factory sins, Merchant Shipping Act sins—none of which I would be thought to except against in particular, but all of which, taken together, show us that Socialism can be a hard master even in the beginning. If it go on to such heights as we hear proposed and lauded, if it come actually to its ideal of the ant-heap, ruled with iron justice, the number of new contraventions will be out of all proportion multiplied. Take the case of work alone. Man is an idle animal. He is at least as intelligent as the ant; but generations of advisers have in vain recommended him the ant's example. Of those who are found truly indefatigable in business, some are misers; some are the practisers of delicate industries, like gardening; some are students, artists, inventors, or discoverers, men lured forward by successive hopes; and the rest are those who live by games of skill or hazard —financiers, billiard-players, gamblers, and the like. But in unbeloved toils, even under the prick of necessity, no man is continually sedulous. Once eliminate the fear of starvation, once eliminate or bound the hope of riches, and we shall see plenty of skulking and malingering. Society will then be something not wholly unlike a cotton plantation in the old days; with cheerful, careless, demoralized slaves, with elected overseers, and instead of the planter, a chaotic popular assembly. If the blood be purposeful and the soil strong, such a plantation may succeed, and be, indeed, a busy ant-heap, with full granaries and long hours of leisure. But even then I think the whip will be in the overseer's hands, and not in vain. For, when it comes to be a question of each man doing his own share or the rest doing more, prettiness of sentiment will be forgotten. To dock the skulker's food is not enough; many will rather eat haws and starve on petty pilferings than put their shoulder to the wheel for one hour daily. For such as these, then, the whip will be in the overseer's hand; and his own sense of justice and the superintendence of a chaotic popular assembly will be the only checks on its employment. Now, you may be an industrious man and a good citizen, and yet not love, nor yet be loved

by Dr. Fell the inspector. It is admitted by private soldiers that the disfavor of a sergeant is an evil not to be combated; offend the sergeant, they say, and in a brief while you will either be disgraced or have deserted. And the sergeant can no longer appeal to the lash. But if these things go on, we shall see, or our sons shall see, what it is to have offended an inspector.

This for the unfortunate. But with the fortunate also, even those whom the inspector loves, it may not be altogether well. It is concluded that in such a state of society, supposing it to be financially sound, the level of comfort will be high. It does not follow: there are strange depths of idleness in man, a too-easily-got sufficiency, as in the case of the sago eaters, often quenching the desire for all besides; and it is possible that the men of the richest ant-heaps may sink even into squalor. But suppose they do not; suppose our tricksy instrument of human nature, when we play upon it this new tune, should respond kindly; suppose no one to be damped and none exasperated by the new conditions, the whole enterprise to be financially sound—a vaulting supposition—and all the inhabitants to dwell together in a golden mean of comfort: we have yet to ask ourselves if this be what man desire or if it be what man will even deign to accept for a continuance. It is certain that man loves to eat, it is not certain that he loves that only or the best. He is supposed to love comfort; it is not a love, at least, that he is faithful to. He is supposed to love happiness; it is my contention that he rather loves excitement. Danger, enterprise, hope, the novel, the aleatory are dearer to man than regular meals. He does not think so when he is hungry, but he thinks so again as soon as he is fed; and on the hypothesis of a successful ant-heap, he would never go hungry. It would be always after dinner in that society, as, in the land of the Lotus-eaters, it was always afternoon; and food, which, when we have it not, seems all-important, drops in our esteem, as soon as we have it, to a mere prerequisite of living. That for which man lives is not the same thing for all individuals nor in all ages; yet it has a common base; what he seeks and what he must have is that which

will seize and hold his attention. Regular meals and weather-proof lodgings will not do this long. Play in its wide sense, as the artificial induction of sensation, including all games and all arts, will, indeed, go far to keep him conscious of himself; but in the end he wearies for realities. Study or experiment, to some rare natures, are the unbroken pastime of a life. These are enviable natures; people shut in the house by sickness often bitterly envy them; but the commoner man can not continue to exist upon such altitudes: his feet itch for physical adventure; his blood boils for physical dangers, pleasures, and triumphs; his fancy, the looker after new things, can not continue to look for them in books and crucibles, but must seek them on the breathing stage of life. Pinches, buffets. the glow of hope, the shock of disappointment, furious contention with obstacles: these are the true elixir for all vital spirits, these are what they seek alike in their romantic enterprises and their unromantic dissipations. When they are taken in some pinch closer than the common, they cry "Catch me here again!" and sure enough you catch them there again—perhaps before the week is out. It is as old as "Robinson Crusoe"; as old as man. Our race has not been strained for all these ages through that sieve of dangers that we call Natural Selection, to sit down with patience in the tedium of safety; the voices of its fathers call it forth. Already in our society as it exists, the *bourgeois* is too much cottoned about for any zest in living; he sits in his parlor out of reach of any danger, often out of reach of any vicissitude but one of health, and there he yawns. If the people in the next villa took pot-shots at him, he might be killed indeed, but, so long as he escaped, he would find his blood oxygenated and his views of the world brighter. If Mr. Mallock, on his way to the publishers, should have his skirts pinned to the wall by a javelin, it would not occur to him—at least for several hours—to ask if life were worth living; and if such peril were a daily matter, he would ask it never more; he would have other things to think about, he would be living indeed—not lying in a box with cotton; safe, but immeasurably dull. The aleatory, whether it touch life,

or fortune, or renown—whether we explore Africa or only toss for half-pence—that is what I conceive men to love best, and that is what we are seeking to exclude from men's existence. Of all forms of the aleatory, that which most commonly attends our working men—the danger of misery from want of work—is the least inspiriting: it does not whip the blood, it does not evoke the glory of contest; it is tragic, but it is passive; and yet, in so far as it is aleatory, and a peril sensibly touching them, it does truly season the men's lives. Of those who fail, I do not speak —despair should be sacred; but to those who even modestly succeed, the changes of their life bring interest: a job found, a shilling saved, a dainty earned, all these are wells of pleasure springing afresh for the successful poor; and it is not from these but from the villa dweller that we hear complaints of the unworthiness of life. Much, then, as the average of the proletariat would gain in this new state of life, they would also lose a certain something, which would not be missed in the beginning, but would be missed progressively and progressively lamented. Soon there would be a looking back: there would be tales of the old world humming in young men's ears, tales of the tramp and the pedler, and the hopeful emigrant. And in the stall-fed life of the successful ant-heap—with its regular meals, regular duties, regular pleasures, an even course of life, and fear excluded—the vicissitudes, delights, and havens of to-day will seem of epic breadth. This may seem a shallow observation, but the springs by which men are moved lie much on the surface. Bread, I believe, has always been considered first, but the circus comes close upon its heels. Bread we suppose to be given amply; the cry for circuses will be the louder, and if the life of our descendants be such as we have conceived, there are two beloved pleasures on which they will be likely to fall back: the pleasure of intrigue and of sedition.

In all this I have supposed the ant-heap to be financially sound. I am no economist, only a writer of fiction; but even as such, I know one thing that bears on the economic question—I know the imperfection of man's faculty for business. The Anarchists, who count some rugged ele-

ments of common sense among what seems to me their tragic errors, have said upon this matter all that I could wish to say, and condemned beforehand great economical politics. So far it is obvious that they are right; they may be right also in predicting a period of communal independence, and they may even be right in thinking that desirable. But the rise of communes is none the less the end of economic equality, just when we were told it was beginning. Communes will not be all equal in extent, nor in quality of soil, nor in growth of population; nor will the surplus produce of all be equally marketable. It will be the old story of competing interests, only with a new unit; and as it appears to me, a new, inevitable danger. For the merchant and the manufacturer, in this new world, will be a sovereign commune; it is a sovereign power that will see its crops undersold, and its manufactures worsted in the market. And all the more dangerous that the sovereign power should be small. Great powers are slow to stir; national affronts, even with the aid of newspapers, filter slowly into popular consciousness; national losses are so unequally shared, that one part of the population will be counting its gains while another sits by a cold hearth. But in the sovereign commune all will be centralized and sensitive. When jealousy springs up, when (let us say) the commune of Poole has overreached the commune of Dorchester, irritation will run like quicksilver throughout the body politic; each man in Dorchester will have to suffer directly in his diet and his dress; even the secretary, who drafts the official correspondence, will sit down to his task embittered, as a man who has dined ill and may expect to dine worse; and thus a business difference between communes will take on much the same color as a dispute between diggers in the lawless West, and will lead as directly to the arbitrament of blows. So that the establishment of the communal system will not only reintroduce all the injustices and heartburnings of economic inequality, but will, in all human likelihood, inaugurate a world of hedgerow warfare. Dorchester will march on Poole, Sherburne on Dorchester, Wimborne on both; the wagons will be fired on as they follow the

highway, the trains wrecked on the lines, the plowman will go armed into the field of tillage; and if we have not a return of ballad literature, the local press at least will celebrate in a high vein the victory of Cerne Abbas or the reverse of Toller Porcorum. At least this will not be dull; when I was younger, I could have welcomed such a world with relief; but it is the New World with a vengeance, and irresistibly suggests the growth of military powers and the foundation of new empires.

BEAU AUSTIN

BY

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

AND

WILLIAM ERNEST HENLEY

30-8-Stv

DEDICATED

WITH ADMIRATION AND RESPECT

TO

GEORGE MEREDITH

Bournemouth,
1st October, 1884

CAST OF THE FIRST PRESENTATION AT THE HAYMARKET THEATRE

Monday, November 3, 1890.

George Frederick Austin	Mr. Tree.
John Fenwick	Mr. Fred. Terry.
Anthony Musgrave	Mr. Edmund Maurice.
Menteith	Mr. Brookfield.
A Royal Duke	Mr. Robb Hardwood.
Dorothy Musgrave	Mrs. Tree.
Miss Evelina Foster	Miss Rose Leclercq.
Barbara Ridley	Miss Aylward.

Visitors to the Wells.

PROLOGUE

Spoken by Mr. Tree *in the character of*
Beau Austin

"To all and singular," as Dryden says,
We bring a fancy of those Georgian days,
Whose style still breathed a faint and fine perfume
Of old-world courtliness and old-world bloom:
When speech was elegant and talk was fit,
For slang had not been canonized as wit;
When manners reigned, when breeding had the wall,
And Women—yes!—were ladies first of all;
When Grace was conscious of its gracefulness,
And man—though Man!—was not ashamed to dress.
A brave formality, a measured ease,
Were his—and hers—whose effort was to please.
And to excel in pleasing was to reign
And, if you sighed, never to sigh in vain.

But then, as now—it may be, something more—
Woman and man were human to the core.
The hearts that throbbed behind that quaint attire
Burned with a plenitude of essential fire.
They too could risk, they also could rebel,
They could love wisely—they could love too well.
In that great duel of Sex, that ancient strife
Which is the very central fact of life,
They could—and did—engage it breath for breath,
They could—and did—get wounded unto death.
As at all times since time for us began
Woman was truly woman, man was man,
And joy and sorrow were as much at home
In trifling Tunbridge as in mighty Rome.

Dead—dead and done with! Swift from shine to shade
The roaring generations flit and fade.
To this one, fading, flitting, like the rest,

We come to proffer—be it worst or best—
A sketch, a shadow, of one brave old time;
A hint of what it might have held sublime;
A dream, an idyl, call it what you will,
Of man still Man, and woman—Woman still!

BEAU AUSTIN

MUSICAL INDUCTION: *"Lascia ch'io pianga" (Rinaldo)*
HANDEL.

PERSONS REPRESENTED

GEORGE FREDERICK AUSTIN, called "Beau Austin"....Aetat. 50
JOHN FENWICK, of Allonby Shaw....Aetat. 26
ANTHONY MUSGRAVE, Cornet in the Prince's Own....Aetat. 21
MENTEITH, the Beau's Valet....Aetat. 55
A ROYAL DUKE (Dumb show.)
DOROTHY MUSGRAVE, Anthony's Sister....Aetat. 25
MISS EVELINA FOSTER, her Aunt....Aetat. 45
BARBARA RIDLEY, her Maid....Aetat. 20

Visitors to the Wells.

The Time is 1820. The Scene is laid at Tunbridge Wells. The Action occupies a space of ten hours.

ACT I

The Stage represents Miss Foster's apartments at the Wells. Doors, L. and C.; a window, L. C., looking on the street; a table, R., laid for breakfast.

SCENE I

BARBARA; *to her* MISS FOSTER

Barbara. (*Out of window.*)

MR. MENTEITH! Mr. Menteith! Mr. Menteith!—Drat his old head! Will nothing make him hear?—Mr. Menteith!

MISS FOSTER. (*Entering.*) Barbara! This is incredible: after all my lessons, to be leaning from the window, and calling (for unless my ears deceived me, you were positively calling!) into the street.

BARBARA. Well, madam, just wait until you hear who it was. I declare it was much more for Miss Dorothy and

yourself than for me; and if it was a little countrified, I had a good excuse.

Miss Foster. Nonsense, child! At least, who was it?

Barbara. Miss Evelina, I was sure you would ask. Well, what do you think? I was looking out of the window at the barber's opposite—

Miss Foster. Of which I entirely disapprove—

Barbara. And first there came out two of the most beautiful—the Royal livery, madam!

Miss Foster. Of course, of course; the Duke of York arrived last night. I trust you did not hail the Duke's footmen?

Barbara. Oh, no, madam, it was after they were gone. Then, who should come out—but you'll never guess!

Miss Foster. I shall certainly not try.

Barbara. Mr. Menteith himself!

Miss Foster. Why, child, I never heard of him.

Barbara. Oh, madam, not the Beau's own gentleman?

Miss Foster. Mr. Austin's servant. No? Is it possible? By that, George Austin must be here.

Barbara. No doubt of that, madam; they're never far apart. He came out feeling his chin, madam, so; and a packet of letters under his arm, so; and he had the Beau's own walk to that degree you couldn't tell his back from his master's.

Miss Foster. My dear Barbara, you too frequently forget yourself. A young woman in your position must beware of levity.

Barbara. Madam, I know it; but la, what are you to make of me? Look at the time and trouble dear Miss Dorothy was always taking—she that trained up everybody—and see what's come of it: Barbara Ridley I was, and Barbara Ridley I am; and I don't do with fashionable ways—I can't do with them; and indeed, Miss Evelina, I do sometimes wish we were all back again on Edenside, and Mr. Anthony a boy again, and dear Miss Dorothy her old self, galloping the bay mare along the moor, and taking care of all of us as if she was our mother, bless her heart!

Miss Foster. Miss Dorothy herself, child? Well, now

you mention it, Tunbridge of late has scarcely seemed to suit her constitution. She falls away, has not a word to throw at a dog, and is ridiculously pale. Well, now Mr. Austin has returned, after six months of infidelity to the dear Wells, we shall all, I hope, be brightened up. Has the mail come?

BARBARA. That it has, madam, and sight of Mr. Menteith put it clean out of my head. (*With letters.*) Four for you, Miss Evelina, two for me, and only one for Miss Dorothy. Miss Dorothy seems quite neglected, does she not? Six months ago, it was a different story.

MISS FOSTER. Well, and that's true, Barbara, and I had not remarked it. I must take her seriously to task. No young lady in her position should neglect her correspondence. (*Opening a letter.*) Here's from that dear ridiculous boy, the Cornet, announcing his arrival for to-day.

BARBARA. Oh, madam, will he come in his red coat?

MISS FOSTER. I could not conceive his missing such a chance. Youth, child, is always vain, and Mr. Anthony is unusually young.

BARBARA. La, madam, he can't help that.

MISS FOSTER. My child, I am not so sure. Mr. Anthony is a great concern to me. He was orphaned, to be sure, at ten years old; and ever since he has been only, as it were, his sister's son. Dorothy did everything for him: more indeed than I thought quite ladylike, but I suppose I begin to be old-fashioned. See how she worked and slaved—yes, slaved!—for him: teaching him herself, with what pains and patience she only could reveal, and learning that she might be able; and see what he is now: a gentleman, of course, but, to be frank, a very commonplace one: not what I had hoped of Dorothy's brother; not what I had dreamed of the heir of two families—Musgrave and Foster, child! Well, he may now meet Mr. Austin. He requires a Mr. Austin to embellish and correct his manners. (*Opening another letter.*) Why, Barbara, Mr. John Scrope and Miss Kate Dacre are to be married!

BARBARA. La, madam, how nice!

MISS FOSTER. They are, as I'm a sinful woman. And

when will you be married, Barbara? and when dear Dorothy? I hate to see old maids a-making.

BARBARA. La, Miss Evelina, there's no harm in an old maid.

MISS FOSTER. You speak like a fool, child: sour grapes are all very well, but it's a woman's business to be married. As for Dorothy, she is five-and-twenty, and she breaks my heart. Such a match, too! Ten thousand to her fortune, the best blood in the north, a most advantageous person, all the graces, the finest sensibility, excellent judgment, the Foster walk; and all these to go positively a-begging! The men seem stricken with blindness. Why, child, when I came out (and I was the dear girl's image!), I had more swains at my feet in a fortnight than our Dorothy in —Oh, I can not fathom it: it must be the girl's own fault.

BARBARA. Why, madam, I did think it was a case with Mr. Austin.

MISS FOSTER. With Mr. Austin? Why, how very rustic! The attentions of a gentleman like Mr. Austin, child, are not supposed to lead to matrimony. He is a feature of society: an ornament: a personage: a private gentleman by birth, but a kind of king by habit and reputation. What woman could he marry? Those to whom he might properly aspire are all too far below him. I have known George Austin too long, child, and I understand that the very greatness of his success condemns him to remain unmarried.

BARBARA. Sure, madam, that must be tiresome for him.

MISS FOSTER. Some day, child, you will know better than to think so. George Austin, as I conceive him, and as he is regarded by the world, is one of the triumphs of the other sex. I walked my first minuet with him: I wouldn't tell you the year, child, for worlds; but it was soon after his famous rencounter with Colonel Villiers. He had killed his man, he wore pink and silver, was most elegantly pale, and the most ravishing creature!

BARBARA. Well, madam, I believe that: he is the most beautiful gentleman still.

Scene II

To these, Dorothy, *L.*

Dorothy. (*Entering.*) Good morning, aunt! Is there anything for me? (*She goes eagerly to table, and looks at letters.*)

Miss Foster. Good morning, niece. Breakfast, Barbara.

Dorothy. (*With letter unopened.*) Nothing.

Miss Foster. And what do you call that, my dear? (*Sitting.*) Is John Fenwick nobody?

Dorothy. (*Looking at letter.*) From John? Oh, yes, so it is. (*Lays down letter unopened, and sits to breakfast,* Barbara *waiting.*)

Miss Foster. (*To* Barbara, *with plate.*) Thanks, child; now you may give me some tea. Dolly, I must insist on your eating a good breakfast: I can not away with your pale cheeks and that Patience-on-a-Monument kind of look. (Toast, Barbara.) At Edenside you ate and drank and looked like Hebe. What have you done with your appetite?

Dorothy. I don't know, aunt, I'm sure.

Miss Foster. Then consider, please, and recover it as soon as you can: to a young lady in your position a good appetite is an attraction—almost a virtue. Do you know that your brother arrives this morning?

Dorothy. Dear Anthony! Where is his letter, Aunt Evelina? I am pleased that he should leave London and its perils, if only for a day.

Miss Foster. My dear, there are moments when you positively amaze me. (Barbara, some *pâté,* if you please!) I beg you not to be a prude. All women, of course, are virtuous; but a prude is something I regard with abhorrence. The Cornet is seeing life, which is exactly what he wanted. You brought him up surprisingly well; I have always admired you for it; but let us admit—as women of the world, my dear—it was no upbringing for a man. You and that fine solemn fellow, John Fen-

wick, led a life that was positively no better than the Middle Ages; and between the two of you, poor Anthony (who, I am sure, was a most passive creature!) was so packed with principle and admonition that I vow and declare he reminded me of Issachar stooping between his two burdens. It was high time for him to be done with your apron-string, my dear: he has all his wild oats to sow; and that is an occupation which it is unwise to defer too long. By the bye, have you heard the news? The Duke of York has done us a service for which I was unprepared. (More tea, Barbara!) George Austin, bringing the prince in his train, is with us once more.

DOROTHY. I knew he was coming.

MISS FOSTER. You knew, child? and did not tell? You are a public criminal.

DOROTHY. I did not think it mattered, Aunt Evelina.

MISS FOSTER. Oh, do not make believe. I am in love with him myself, and have been any time since Nelson and the Nile. As for you, Dolly, since he went away six months ago, you have been positively in the megrims. I shall date your loss of appetite from George Austin's vanishing. No, my dear, our family require entertainment: we must have wit about us, and beauty, and the *bel air*.

BARBARA. Well, Miss Dorothy, perhaps it's out of my place: but I do hope Mr. Austin will come: I should love to have him see my necklace on.

DOROTHY. Necklace? what necklace? Did he give you a necklace?

BARBARA. Yes, indeed, Miss, that he did: the very same day he drove you in his curricle to Penshurst. You remember, Miss, I couldn't go.

DOROTHY. I remember.

MISS FOSTER. And so do I. I had a touch of . . . Foster in the blood: the family gout, dears! . . . And you, you ungrateful nymph, had him a whole day to yourself, and not a word to tell me when you returned.

DOROTHY. I remember. (*Rising.*) Is that the necklace, Barbara? It does not suit you. Give it me.

BARBARA. La, Miss Dorothy, I wouldn't for the world.

DOROTHY. Come, give it me. I want it. Thank you: you shall have my birthday pearls instead.

MISS FOSTER. Why, Dolly, I believe you're jealous of the maid. Foster, Foster: always a Foster trick to wear the willow in anger.

DOROTHY. I do not think, madam, that I am of a jealous habit.

MISS FOSTER. Oh, the personage is your excuse! And I can tell you, child, that when George Austin was playing Florizel to the Duchess's Perdita, all the maids in England fell a prey to green-eyed melancholy. It was the *ton,* you see: not to pine for that Sylvander was to resign from good society.

DOROTHY. Aunt Evelina, stop; I can not endure to hear you. What is he, after all, but just Beau Austin? What has he done—with half a century of good health, what has he done that is either memorable or worthy? Diced and danced and set fashions; vanquished in a drawing-room, fought for a word; what else? As if these were the meaning of life! Do not make me think so poorly of all of us women. Sure, we can rise to admire a better kind of man than Mr. Austin. We are not all to be snared with the eye, dear aunt; and those that are—Oh! I know not whether I more hate or pity them.

MISS FOSTER. You will give me leave, my niece: such talk is neither becoming in a young lady nor creditable to your understanding. The world was made a great while before Miss Dorothy Musgrave; and you will do much better to ripen your opinions, and in the meantime read your letter, which I perceive you have not opened. (DOROTHY *opens and reads letter.*) Barbara, child, you should not listen at table.

BARBARA. Sure, madam, I hope I know my place.

MISS FOSTER. Then do not do it again.

DOROTHY. Poor John Fenwick! he coming here!

MISS FOSTER. Well, and why not? Dorothy, my darling child, you give me pain. You never had but one chance, let me tell you pointedly: and that was John Fenwick. If I were you, I would not let my vanity so blind me. This is not the way to marry.

DOROTHY. Dear aunt, I shall never marry.

MISS FOSTER. A fiddlestick's end! every one must marry. (*Rising.*) Are you for the Pantiles?

DOROTHY. Not to-day, dear.

MISS FOSTER. Well, well! have your wish, Dolorosa. Barbara, attend and dress me.

SCENE III

DOROTHY

DOROTHY. How she tortures me, poor aunt, my poor blind aunt; and I—I could break her heart with a word. That she should see nothing, know nothing—there's where it kills. Oh, it is more than I can bear . . . and yet, how much less than I deserve! Mad girl, of what do I complain? that this dear innocent woman still believes me good, still pierces me to the soul with trustfulness. Alas, and were it otherwise, were her dear eyes opened to the truth, what were left me but death?—He, too—she must still be praising him, and every word is a lash upon my conscience. If I could die of my secret; if I could cease—but one moment cease—this living lie; if I could sleep and forget and be at rest!—Poor John! (*Reading the letter.*) He at least is guiltless; and yet for my fault he too must suffer, he too must bear part in my shame. Poor John Fenwick! Has he come back with the old story: with what might have been, perhaps, had we stayed by Edenside? Eden? yes, my Eden, from which I fell. O my old north country, my old river—the river of my innocence, the old country of my hopes—how could I endure to look on you now? And how to meet John?—John, with the old love on his lips, the old, honest, innocent, faithful heart! There was a Dorothy once who was not unfit to ride with him, her heart as light as his, her life as clear as the bright rivers we forded; he called her his Diana, he crowned her so with rowan. Where is that Dorothy now? that Diana? she that was everything to John? For Oh, I did him good; I know I did him good; I will still believe I did him good: I made

him honest and kind and a true man; alas, and could not guide myself! And now, how will he despise me! For he shall know; if I die, he shall know all; I could not live, and not be true with him. (*She takes out the necklace and looks at it.*) That he should have bought me from my maid! George, George, that you should have stooped to this! Basely as you have used me, this is the basest. Perish the witness! (*She treads the trinket under her foot.*) Break, break like my heart, break like my hopes, perish like my good name!

Scene IV

To her, Fenwick, *C.*

Fenwick. (*After a pause.*) Is this how you receive me, Dorothy? Am I not welcome?—Shall I go then?

Dorothy. (*Running to him, with hands outstretched.*) Oh, no, John, not for me. (*Turning, and pointing to the necklace.*) But you find me changed.

Fenwick. (*With a movement toward the necklace.*) This?

Dorothy. No, no, let it lie. That is a trinket—broken. But the old Dorothy is dead.

Fenwick. Dead, dear? Not to me.

Dorothy. Dead to you—dead to all men.

Fenwick. I loved you as a boy. There is not a meadow on Edenside but is dear to me for your sake, not a cottage but recalls your goodness, not a rock nor a tree but brings back something of the best and brightest youth man ever had. You were my teacher and my queen; I walked with you, I talked with you, I rode with you; I lived in your shadow; I saw with your eyes. You will never know, dear Dorothy, what you were to the dull boy you bore with; you will never know with what romance you filled my life, with what devotion, with what tenderness and honor. At night I lay awake and worshiped you; in my dreams I saw you, and you loved me; and you remember, when we told each other stories—you have not forgotten, dearest—that Prin-

cess Hawthorn that was still the heroine of mine: who was she? I was not bold enough to tell, but she was you! You, my virgin huntress, my Diana, my queen.

DOROTHY. Oh, silence, silence—pity!

FENWICK. No, dear; neither for your sake nor mine will I be silenced. I have begun; I must go on and finish, and put fortune to the touch. It was from you I learned honor, duty, piety, and love. I am as you made me, and I exist but to reverence and serve you. Why else have I come here, the length of England, my heart burning higher every mile, my very horse a clog to me? why, but to ask you for my wife? Dorothy, you will not deny me.

DOROTHY. You have not asked me about this broken trinket?

FENWICK. Why should I ask? I love you.

DOROTHY. Yet I must tell you. Sit down. (*She picks up the necklace, and stands looking at it. Then breaking down.*) O John, John, it's long since I left home.

FENWICK. Too long, dear love. The very trees will welcome you.

DOROTHY. Ay, John, but I no longer love you. The old Dorothy is dead, God pardon her!

FENWICK. Dorothy, who is the man?

DOROTHY. Oh, poor Dorothy! Oh, poor dead Dorothy! John, you found me breaking this: me, your Diana of the Fells, the Diana of your old romance by Edenside. Diana —Oh, what a name for me! Do you see this trinket? It is a chapter in my life. A chapter, do I say? My whole life, for there is none to follow. John, you must bear with me, you must help me. I have that to tell—there is a secret—I have a secret, John—Oh, for God's sake, understand. That Diana you revered—Oh, John, John, you must never speak of love to me again.

FENWICK. What do you say? How dare you?

DOROTHY. John, it is true. Your Diana, even she, she whom you so believed in, she who so believed in herself, came out into the world only to be broken. I met, here at the Wells, a man—why should I tell you his name? I met him, and I loved him. My heart was all his own; yet he was not content with that: he must intrigue to catch

me, he must bribe my maid with this. (*Throws the necklace on the table.*) Did he love me? Well, John, he said he did; and be it so! He loved, he betrayed, and he has left me.

FENWICK. Betrayed?

DOROTHY. Ay, even so; I was betrayed. The fault was mine that I forgot our innocent youth, and your honest love.

FENWICK. Dorothy, O Dorothy!

DOROTHY. Yours is the pain; but, O John, think it is for your good. Think in England how many true maids may be waiting for your love, how many that can bring you a whole heart, and be a noble mother to your children, while your poor Diana, at the first touch, has proved all frailty. Go, go and be happy, and let me be patient. I have sinned.

FENWICK. By God, I'll have his blood.

DOROTHY. Stop! I love him. (*Between* FENWICK *and door, C.*)

FENWICK. What do I care? I loved you too. Little he thought of that, little either of you thought of that. His blood—I'll have his blood!

DOROTHY. You shall never know his name.

FENWICK. Know it? Do you think I can not guess? Do you think I had not heard he followed you. Do you think I had not suffered—Oh, suffered! George Austin is the man. Dear shall he pay it!

DOROTHY. (*At his feet.*) Pity me; spare me, spare your Dorothy! I love him—love him—love him!

FENWICK. Dorothy, you have robbed me of my happiness, and now you would rob me of my revenge.

DOROTHY. I know it; and shall I ask, and you not grant?

FENWICK. (*Raising her.*) No, Dorothy, you shall ask nothing, nothing in vain from me. You ask his life; I give it you as I would give you my soul; as I would give you my life, if I had any left. My life is done; you have taken it. Not a hope, not an end; not even revenge. (*He sits.*) Dorothy, you see your work.

DOROTHY. O God, forgive me.

FENWICK. Ay, Dorothy, He will, as I do.

DOROTHY. As you do? Do you forgive me, John?

FENWICK. Ay, more than that, poor soul. I said my life was done, I was wrong; I have still a duty. It is not in vain you taught me; I shall still prove to you that it was not in vain. You shall soon find that I am no backward friend. Farewell.

MUSICAL INDUCTION : "*The Lass of Richmond Hill.*"

ACT II

The Stage represents GEORGE AUSTIN'S dressing-room. Elaborate toilet-table, R., with chair; a cheval glass so arranged as to correspond with glass on table. Breakfast-table, L., front. Door, L. The Beau is discovered at table, in dressing-gown, trifling with correspondence. MENTEITH is frothing chocolate.

SCENE I

AUSTIN, MENTEITH

MENTEITH. At the barber's, Mr. George, I had the pleasure of meeting two of the Dook's gentlemen.

AUSTIN. Well, and was his Royal Highness satisfied with his quarters?

MENTEITH. Quite so, Mr. George. Delighted, I believe.

AUSTIN. I am rejoiced to hear it. I wish I could say I was as pleased with my journey, Menteith. This is the first time I ever came to the Wells in another person's carriage; Duke or not, it shall be the last, Menteith.

MENTEITH. Ah, Mr. George, no wonder. And how many times have we made that journey back and forth?

AUSTIN. Enough to make us older than we look.

MENTEITH. To be sure, Mr. George, you do wear well.

AUSTIN. *We* wear well, Menteith.

MENTEITH. I hear, Mr. George, that Miss Musgrave is of the company.

AUSTIN. Is she so? Well, well! well, well!

MENTEITH. I have not seen the young lady myself, Mr. George; but the barber tells me she's looking poorly.

AUSTIN. Poorly?

MENTEITH. Yes, Mr. George, poorly was his word.

AUSTIN. Well, Menteith, I am truly sorry. She is not the first.

MENTEITH. Yes, Mr. George. (*A bell.* MENTEITH *goes out, and reenters with card.*)

AUSTIN. (*With card.*) Whom have we here? Anthony Musgrave?

MENTEITH. A fine young man, Mr. George; and with a look of the young lady, but not so gentlemanly.

AUSTIN. You have an eye, you have an eye. Let him in.

SCENE II

AUSTIN, MENTEITH, ANTHONY

AUSTIN. I am charmed to have this opportunity, Mr. Musgrave. You belong to my old corps, I think? And how does my good friend, Sir Frederick? I had his line; but like all my old comrades, he thinks last about himself, and gives me not of his news.

ANTHONY. I protest, sir, this is a very proud moment. Your name is still remembered in the regiment. (AUSTIN *bows.*) The Colonel—he keeps his health, sir, considering his age (AUSTIN *bows again, and looks at* MENTEITH) —tells us young men you were a devil of a fellow in your time.

AUSTIN. I believe I was—in my time. Menteith, give Mr. Musgrave a dish of chocolate. So, sir, we see you at the Wells.

ANTHONY. I have but just alighted. I had but one thought, sir: to pay my respects to Mr. Austin. I have not yet kissed my aunt and sister.

AUSTIN. In my time—to which you refer—the ladies had come first.

ANTHONY. The women? I take you, sir. But then you see, a man's relatives don't count. And besides, Mr. Austin, between men of the world, I am fairly running away from the sex: I am positively in flight. Little Hortense of the Opera; you know; she sent her love to you. She's mad about me, I think. You never saw a creature so fond.

AUSTIN. Well, well, child! you are better here. In my time—to which you have referred—I knew the lady. Does she wear well?

ANTHONY. I beg your pardon, sir!

AUSTIN. No offense, child, no offense. She was a very lively creature. But you neglect your chocolate, I see?

ANTHONY. We don't patronize it, Mr. Austin; we haven't for some years: the service has quite changed since your time. You'd be surprised.

AUSTIN. Doubtless. I am.

ANTHONY. I assure you, sir, I and Jack Bosbury of the Fifty-Second—

AUSTIN. The Hampshire Bosburys?—

ANTHONY. I do not know exactly, sir. I believe he is related.

AUSTIN. Or perhaps—I remember a Mr. Bosbury, a cutter of coats. I have the vanity to believe I formed his business.

ANTHONY. I—I hope not, sir. But as I was saying, I and this Jack Bosbury, and the Brummagem Bantam—a very pretty light-weight, sir—drank seven bottles of Burgundy to the three of us inside the eighty minutes. Jack, sir, was a little cut; but me and the Bantam went out and finished the evening on hot gin. Life, sir, life! Tom Cribb was with us. He spoke of you, too, Tom did: said you'd given him a wrinkle for his second fight with the black man. No, sir, I assure you, you're not forgotten.

AUSTIN. (*Bows.*) I am pleased to learn it. In my time, I had an esteem for Mr. Cribb.

ANTHONY. Oh, come, sir! but your time can not be said to be over.

AUSTIN. Menteith, you hear?

MENTEITH. Yes, Mr. George.

ANTHONY. The Colonel told me that you liked to shake an elbow. Your big main, sir, with Lord Wensleydale, is often talked about. I hope I may have the occasion to sit down with you. I shall count it an honor, I assure you.

AUSTIN. But would your aunt, my very good friend, approve?

ANTHONY. Why, sir, you do not suppose I am in leading-strings?

AUSTIN. You forget, child: a family must hang together. When I was young—in my time—I was alone;

and what I did concerned myself. But a youth who has—as I think you have—a family of ladies to protect, must watch his honor, child, and preserve his fortune . . . You have no commands from Sir Frederick?

ANTHONY. None, sir, none.

AUSTIN. Shall I find you this noon up on the Pantiles? . . . I shall be charmed. Commend me to your aunt and your fair sister. Menteith?

MENTEITH. Yes, Mr. George. (*Shows* ANTHONY *out.*)

SCENE III

AUSTIN, MENTEITH, *returning*

AUSTIN. Was I ever like that, Menteith?

MENTEITH. No, Mr. George, you was always a gentleman.

AUSTIN. Youth, my good fellow, youth.

MENTEITH. Quite so, Mr. George.

AUSTIN. Well, Menteith, we can not make nor mend. We can not play the jockey with Time. Age is the test: of wine, Menteith, and men.

MENTEITH. Me and you and the old Hermitage, Mr. George, he-he!

AUSTIN. And the best of these, the Hermitage. But come: we lose our day. Help me off with this. (MENTEITH *takes off* AUSTIN's *dressing-gown;* AUSTIN *passes R. to dressing-table, and takes up first cravat.*)

AUSTIN. Will the hair do, Menteith?

MENTEITH. Never saw it lay better, Mr. George. (AUSTIN *proceeds to wind first cravat. A bell: exit* MENTEITH. AUSTIN *drops first cravat in basket and takes second.*)

AUSTIN. (*Winding and singing*)—

"I'd crowns resign
To call her mine,
Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill!"

(*Second cravat a failure. Reenter* MENTEITH *with card.*) Fenwick? of Allonby Shaw? A good family,

Menteith, but I don't know the gentleman. (*Lays down card, and takes up third cravat.*) Send him away with every consideration.

MENTEITH. To be sure, Mr. George. (*He goes out. Third cravat a success. Reenter* MENTEITH.) He says, Mr. George, that he has an errand from Miss Musgrave.

AUSTIN. (*With waistcoat.*) Show him in, Menteith, at once. (*Singing and fitting waistcoat at glass*)—

"I'd crowns resign
To call her mine,
Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill!"

SCENE IV

AUSTIN, *R.* *To him* MENTEITH *and* FENWICK

MENTEITH. (*Announcing.*) Mr. Fenwick, Mr. George.

AUSTIN. At the name of Miss Musgrave, my doors fly always open.

FENWICK. I believe, sir, you are acquainted with my cousin, Richard Gaunt?

AUSTIN. The county member? An old and good friend. But you need not go so far afield: I know your good house of Allonby Shaw since the days of the Black Knight. We are, in fact, and at a very royal distance, cousins.

FENWICK. I desired, sir, from the nature of my business, that you should recognize me for a gentleman.

AUSTIN. The preliminary, sir, is somewhat grave.

FENWICK. My business is both grave and delicate.

AUSTIN. Menteith, my good fellow. (*Exit* MENTEITH.) Mr. Fenwick, honor me so far as to be seated. (*They sit.*) I await your pleasure.

FENWICK. Briefly, sir, I am come, not without hope, to appeal to your good heart.

AUSTIN. From Miss Musgrave?

FENWICK. No, sir, I abused her name, and am here upon my own authority. Upon me the consequence.

AUSTIN. Proceed.

FENWICK. Mr. Austin, Dorothy Musgrave is the oldest and dearest of my friends, is the lady whom for ten years it has been my hope to make my wife. She has shown me reasons to discard that hope for another: that I may call her Mrs. Austin.

AUSTIN. In the best interests of the lady (*rising*) I question if you have been well inspired. You are aware, sir, that from such interference there is but one issue: to whom shall I address my friend?

FENWICK. Mr. Austin, I am here to throw myself upon your mercy. Strange as my errand is, it will seem yet more strange to you that I came prepared to accept at your hands any extremity of dishonor and not fight. The lady whom it is my boast to serve has honored me with her commands. These are my law, and by these your life is sacred.

AUSTIN. Then, sir (*with his hand upon the bell*), this conversation becomes impossible. You have me at too gross a disadvantage; and, as you are a gentleman and respect another, I would suggest that you retire.

FENWICK. Sir, you speak of disadvantage; think of mine. All my life long, with all the forces of my nature, I have loved this lady. I came here to implore her to be my wife, to be my queen; my saint she had been always! She was too noble to deceive me. She told me what you know. I will not conceal that my first mood was of anger: I would have killed you like a dog. But, Mr. Austin —bear with me a while—I, on the threshold of my life, who have made no figure in the world, nor ever shall now, who had but one treasure, and have lost it—if I, abandoning revenge, trampling upon jealousy, can supplicate you to complete my misfortune—O Mr. Austin! you who have lived, you whose gallantry is beyond the insolence of a suspicion, you who are a man crowned and acclaimed, who are loved, and loved by such a woman—you who excel me in every point of advantage, will you suffer me to surpass you in generosity?

AUSTIN. You speak from the heart. (*Sits.*) What do you want with me?

FENWICK. Marry her.

AUSTIN. Mr. Fenwick, I am the older man. I have seen much of life, much of society, much of love. When I was young, it was expected of a gentleman to be ready with his hat to a lady, ready with his sword to a man; to honor his word and his king; to be courteous with his equals, generous to his dependents, helpful and trusty in friendship. But was not asked of us to be quixotic. If I had married every lady by whom it is my fortune—not my merit—to have been distinguished, the Wells would scarce be spacious enough for my establishment. You see, sir, that while I respect your emotion, I am myself conducted by experience. And besides, Mr. Fenwick, is not love a warfare? has it not rules? have not our fair antagonists their tactics, their weapons, their place of arms? and is there not a touch of—pardon me the word! of silliness in one who, having fought, and having vanquished, sounds a parley, and capitulates to his own prisoner? Had the lady chosen, had the fortune of war been other, 'tis like she had been Mrs. Austin. Now! . . . You know the world.

FENWICK. I know, sir, that the world contains much cowardice. To find Mr. Austin afraid to do the right, this surprises me.

AUSTIN. Afraid, child?

FENWICK. Yes, sir, afraid. You know her, you know if she be worthy; and you answer me with—the world: the world which has been at your feet: the world which Mr. Austin so well knows how to value and is so able to rule.

AUSTIN. I have lived long enough, Mr. Fenwick, to recognize that the world is a great power. It can make; but it can break.

FENWICK. Sir, suffer me; you spoke but now of friendship, and spoke warmly. Have you forgotten Colonel Villiers?

AUSTIN. Mr. Fenwick, Mr. Fenwick, you forget what I have suffered.

FENWICK. Oh, sir, I know you loved him. And yet, for a random word you quarreled; friendship was weighed

in vain against the world's code of honor; you fought, and your friend fell. I have heard from others how he lay long in agony, and how you watched and nursed him, and it was in your embrace he died. In God's name, have you forgotten that? Was not this sacrifice enough? or must the world, once again, step between Mr. Austin and his generous heart?

AUSTIN. Good God, sir, I believe you are in the right; I believe, upon my soul I believe, there is something in what you say.

FENWICK. Something, Mr. Austin? Oh, credit me, the whole difference betwixt good and evil.

AUSTIN. Nay, nay, but there you go too far. There are many kinds of good: honor is a diamond cut in a thousand facets, and with the true fire in each. Thus, and with all our differences, Mr. Fenwick, you and I can still respect, we can still admire each other.

FENWICK. Bear with me still, sir, if I ask you what is the end of life but to excel in generosity? To pity the weak, to comfort the afflicted, to right where we have wronged, to be brave in reparation—these noble elements you have; for of what besides is the fabric of your dealing with Colonel Villiers? That is man's chivalry to man. Yet to a suffering woman—a woman feeble, betrayed, unconsoled—you deny your clemency, you refuse your aid, you proffer injustice for atonement. Nay, you are so disloyal to yourself that you can choose to be ungenerous and unkind. Where, sir, is the honor? What facet of the diamond is that?

AUSTIN. You forget, sir, you forget. But go on.

FENWICK. Oh, sir, not I—not I but yourself forgets: George Austin forgets George Austin. A woman loved by him, betrayed him, abandoned by him—that woman suffers; and a point of honor keeps him from his place at her feet. She has played and lost, and the world is with him if he deign to exact the stakes. Is that the Mr. Austin whom Miss Musgrave honored with her trust? Then, sir, how miserably was she deceived!

AUSTIN. Child—child—

FENWICK. Mr. Austin, still bear with me, still follow me. Oh, sir, will you not picture that dear lady's life? Her years how few, her error thus irreparable, what henceforth can be her portion but remorse, the consciousness of self-abasement, the shame of knowing that her trust was ill-bestowed? To think of it: this was a queen among women; and this—this is George Austin's work! Sir, let me touch your heart: let me prevail with you to feel that 'tis impossible.

AUSTIN. I am a gentleman. What do you ask of me?

FENWICK. To be the man she loved: to be clement where the world would have you triumph, to be of equal generosity with the vanquished, to be worthy of her sacrifice and of yourself.

AUSTIN. Mr. Fenwick, your reproof is harsh—

FENWICK. (*Interrupting him.*) Oh, sir, be just, be just!—

AUSTIN. But it is merited, and I thank you for its utterance. You tell me that the true victory comes when the fight is won: that our foe is never so noble nor so dangerous as when she is fallen, that the crowning triumph is that we celebrate over our conquering selves. Sir, you are right. Kindness, ay kindness, after all. And with age, to become clement. Yes, ambition first; then, the rounded vanity—victory still novel; and last, as you say, the royal mood of the mature man: to abdicate for others. . . . Sir, you touched me hard about my dead friend; still harder about my living duty; and I am not so young but I can take a lesson. There is my hand upon it: she shall be my wife.

FENWICK. Ah, Mr. Austin, I was sure of it.

AUSTIN. Then, sir, you were vastly mistaken. There is nothing of Beau Austin here. I have simply, my dear child, sat at the feet of Mr. Fenwick.

FENWICK. Ah, sir, your heart was counselor enough.

AUSTIN. Pardon me. I am vain enough to be the judge: there are but two people in the world who could have wrought this change; yourself and that dear lady. (*Touches bell.*) Suffer me to dismiss you. One instant

of toilet, and I follow. Will you do me the honor to go before and announce my approach? (*Enter* MENTEITH.)

FENWICK. Sir, if my admiration—

AUSTIN. Dear child, the admiration is the other way. (*Embraces him.* MENTEITH *shows him out.*)

SCENE V

AUSTIN

AUSTIN. Upon my word, I think the world is getting better. We were none of us young men like that—in my time, to quote my future brother. (*He sits down before the mirror.*) Well, here ends Beau Austin. Paris, Rome, Vienna, London—victor everywhere: and now he must leave his bones in Tunbridge Wells. (*Looks at his leg.*) Poor Dolly Musgrave! a good girl after all, and will make me a good wife; none better. The last—of how many?—ay, and the best! Walks like Hebe. But still, here ends Beau Austin. Perhaps it's time. Poor Dolly—was she looking poorly? She shall have her wish. Well, we grow older, but we grow no worse.

SCENE VI

AUSTIN, MENTEITH

AUSTIN. Menteith, I am going to be married.

MENTEITH. Well, Mr. George, but I am pleased to hear it. Miss Musgrave is a most elegant lady.

AUSTIN. Ay, Mr. Menteith? and who told you the lady's name?

MENTEITH. Mr. George, you was always a gentleman.

AUSTIN. You mean I wasn't always? Old boy, you are in the right. This shall be a good chance for both you and me. We have lived too long like a brace of truants: now is the time to draw about the fire. How much is left of the old Hermitage?

MENTEITH. Hard upon thirty dozen, Mr. George, and not a bad cork in the bin.

AUSTIN. And a mistress, Menteith, that's worthy of that wine.

MENTEITH. Mr. George, sir, she's worthy of you.

AUSTIN. Gad, I believe it. (*Shakes hands with him.*)

MENTEITH. (*Breaking down.*) Mr. George, you've been a damned good master to me, and I've been a damned good servant to you; we've been proud of each other from the first; but if you'll excuse my plainness, Mr. George, I never liked you better than to-day.

AUSTIN. Cheer up, old boy, the best is yet to come. Get out the tongs, and curl me like a bridegroom. (*Sits before the dressing-glass;* MENTEITH *produces curling irons and plies them.* AUSTIN *sings*)—

"I'd crowns resign
To call her mine,
Sweet Lass of Richmond Hill!"

DROP

Musical Induction: *The "Minuet" from "Don Giovanni."*

ACT III

The Stage represents Miss Foster's lodging as in Act I.

Scene I

Dorothy, *R., at tambour;* Anthony, *C., bestriding chair;* Miss Foster, *L. C.*

Anthony. Yes, ma'am, I like my regiment; we are all gentlemen, from old Fred downward, and all of a good family. Indeed, so are all my friends, except one tailor sort of a fellow, Bosbury. But I'm done with him. I assure you, Aunt Evelina, we are Corinthian to the last degree. I wouldn't shock you ladies for the world—

Miss Foster. Don't mind me, my dear; go on.

Anthony. Really, ma'am, you must pardon me; I trust I understand what topics are to be avoided among females —And before my sister, too! A girl of her age!

Dorothy. Why, you dear, silly fellow, I'm old enough to be your mother.

Anthony. My dear Dolly, you do not understand; you are not a man of the world. But, as I was going on to say, there is no more spicy regiment in the service.

Miss Foster. I am not surprised that it maintains its old reputation. You know, my dear (*to* Dorothy), it was George Austin's regiment.

Dorothy. Was it, aunt?

Anthony. Beau Austin? Yes, it was; and a precious dust they make about him still—a parcel of old frumps! That's why I went to see him. But he's quite extinct: he couldn't be Corinthian if he tried.

Miss Foster. I am afraid that even at your age George Austin held a very different position from the distinguished Anthony Musgrave.

ANTHONY. Come, ma'am, I take that unkindly. Of course I know what you're at: of course the old put cut no end of a dash with the Duchess.

MISS FOSTER. My dear child, I was thinking of no such thing; *that* was immoral.

ANTHONY. Then you mean that affair at Brighton: when he cut the Prince about Perdita Robinson.

MISS FOSTER. No, I had forgotten it.

ANTHONY. Oh, well, I know—that duel! But look here, Aunt Evelina, I don't think you'd be much gratified after all if I were to be broke for killing my commanding officer about a quarrel at cards.

DOROTHY. Nobody asks you, Anthony, to imitate Mr. Austin. I trust you will set yourself a better model. But you may choose a worse. With all his faults, and all his enemies, Mr. Austin is a pattern gentleman. You would not ask a man to be braver, and there are few so generous. I can not bear to hear him called in fault by one so young. Better judges, dear, are better pleased.

ANTHONY. Hey-day! what's this?

MISS FOSTER. Why, Dolly, this is April and May. You surprise me.

DOROTHY. I am afraid, indeed, madam, that you have much to suffer from my caprice. [*She goes out, L.*

SCENE II

ANTHONY, MISS FOSTER

ANTHONY. What is the meaning of all this, ma'am? I don't like it.

MISS FOSTER. Nothing, child, that I know. You spoke of Mr. Austin, our dear friend, like a groom; and she, like any lady of taste, took arms in his defense.

ANTHONY. No, ma'am, that won't do. I know the sex. You mark my words, the girl has some confounded nonsense in her head, and wants looking after.

MISS FOSTER. In my presence, Anthony, I shall ask you to speak of Dorothy with greater respect. With your

permission, your sister and I will continue to direct our own affairs. When we require the interference of so young and confident a champion, you shall know.

[*Courtesies, kisses her hand, and goes out, L.*

Scene III

Anthony

Anthony. Upon my word, I think Aunt Evelina one of the most uncivil old women in the world. Nine weeks ago I came of age; and they still treat me like a boy. I'm a recognized Corinthian, too; take my liquor with old Fred, and go round with the Brummagem Bantam and Jack Bos—. . . Oh, damn Jack Bosbury. If his father was a tailor, he shall fight me for his ungentlemanly conduct. However, that's all one. What I want is to make Aunt Evelina understand that I'm not the man to be put down by an old maid who's been brought up in a work-basket, begad! I've had nothing but rebuffs all day. It's very remarkable. There was that man Austin, to begin with. I'll be hanged if I can stand him. I hear too much of him; and if I can only get a good excuse to put him to the door, I believe it would give Dorothy and all of us a kind of a position. After all, he's not a man to visit in the house of ladies: not when I'm away, at least. Nothing in it of course; but is he a man whose visits I can sanction?

Scene IV

Anthony, Barbara

Barbara. Please, Mr. Anthony, Miss Foster said I was to show your room.

Anthony. Ha! Baby? Now, you come here. You're a girl of sense, I know.

Barbara. La, Mr. Anthony, I hope I'm nothing of the kind.

Anthony. Come, come! that's not the tone I want: I'm

serious. Does this man Austin come much about the house?

BARBARA. O Mr. Anthony, for shame! Why don't you ask Miss Foster?

ANTHONY. Now I wish you to understand: I'm the head of this family. It's my business to look after my sister's reputation, and my aunt's, too, begad! That's what I'm here for: I'm their natural protector. And what I want you, Barbara Ridley, to understand—you whose fathers have served my fathers—is just simply this: if you've any common gratitude, you're bound to help me in the work. Now, Barbara, you know me, and you know my Aunt Evelina. She's a good enough woman; I'm the first to say so. But who is she to take care of a young girl? She's ignorant of the world to that degree she believes in Beau Austin! Now, you and I, Bab, who are not so high and dry, see through and through him; we know that a man like that is no fit company for any inexperienced girl.

BARBARA. O Mr. Anthony, don't say that. (*Weeping.*)

ANTHONY. Hullo! what's wrong?

BARBARA. Nothing that I know of. O Mr. Anthony, I don't think there can be anything.

ANTHONY. Think? Don't think? What's this?

BARBARA. Oh, sir! I don't know, and yet I don't like it. Here's my beautiful necklace all broke to bits: she took it off my very neck, and gave me her birthday pearls instead; and I found it afterward on the table, all smashed to pieces; and all she wanted it for was to take and break it. Why that? It frightens me, Mr. Anthony, it frightens me.

ANTHONY. (*With necklace.*) This? What has this trumpery to do with us?

BARBARA. He gave it me: that's why she broke it.

ANTHONY. He? Who?

BARBARA. Mr. Austin did; and I do believe I should not have taken it, Mr. Anthony, but I thought no harm, upon my word of honor. He was always here: that was six months ago; and indeed, indeed, I thought they were to marry. How would I think else with a born lady like Miss Dorothy?

ANTHONY. Why, Barbara, God help us all, what's this? You don't mean to say that there was—

BARBARA. Here it is, as true as true: they were going for a jaunt; and Miss Foster had her gout; and I was to go with them; and he told me to make believe I was ill; and I did; and I stayed at home; and he gave me that necklace; and they went away together; and, oh dear! I wish I'd never been born.

ANTHONY. Together? he and Dolly? Good Lord! my sister! And since then?

BARBARA. We haven't seen him from that day to this, the wicked villain; and, Mr. Anthony, he hasn't so much as written the poor dear a word.

ANTHONY. Bab, Bab, Bab, this is a devil of a bad business; this is a cruel bad business, Baby; cruel upon me, cruel upon all of us; a family like mine. I'm a young man, Barbara, to have this delicate affair to manage; but, thank God, I'm Musgrave to the bone. He bribed a servant-maid, did he? I keep his bribe; it's mine now; dear thought, by George! He shall have it in his teeth. Shot Colonel Villiers, did he? we'll see how he faces Anthony Musgrave. You're a good girl, Barbara; so far you've served the family. You leave this to me. And, hark ye, dry your eyes and hold your tongue: I'll have no scandal raised by you.

BARBARA. I do hope, sir, you won't use me against Miss Dorothy.

ANTHONY. That's my affair; your business is to hold your tongue. Miss Dorothy has made her bed and must lie on it. Here's Jack Fenwick. You can go.

SCENE V

ANTHONY, FENWICK

ANTHONY. Jack Fenwick, is that you? Come here, my boy. Jack, you've given me many a thrashing, and I deserved 'em; and I'll not see you made a fool of now. George Austin is a damned villain, and Dorothy Mus-

grave is no girl for you to marry: God help me that I should have to say it.

FENWICK. Good God, who told *you?*

ANTHONY. Ay, Jack; it's hard on me, Jack. But you'll stand my friend in spite of this, and you'll take my message to the man, won't you? For it's got to come to blood, Jack: there's no way out of that. And perhaps your poor friend will fall, Jack; think of that: like Villiers. And all for an unworthy sister.

FENWICK. Now, Anthony Musgrave, I give you fair warning; see you take it: one word more against your sister, and we quarrel.

ANTHONY. You let it slip yourself, Jack: you know yourself she's not a virtuous girl.

FENWICK. What do you know of virtue, whose whole boast is to be vicious? How dare you draw conclusions? Dolt and puppy! you can no more comprehend that angel's excellencies than she can stoop to believe in your vices. And you talk of morality? Anthony, I'm a man who has been somewhat roughly tried: take care.

ANTHONY. You don't seem able to grasp the situation, Jack. It's very remarkable; I'm the girl's natural protector; and you should buckle-to and help, like a friend of the family. And instead of that, begad! you turn on me like all the rest.

FENWICK. Now mark me fairly: Mr. Austin follows at my heels; he comes to offer marriage to your sister—that is all you know, and all you shall know; and if by any misplaced insolence of yours this marriage shall miscarry, you have to answer, not to Mr. Austin only, but to me.

ANTHONY. It's all a most discreditable business, and I don't see how you propose to better it by cutting my throat. Of course, if he's going to marry her, it's a different thing; but I don't believe he is, or he'd have asked me. You think me a fool? Well, see they marry, or they'll find me a dangerous fool.

Scene VI

To these, Austin, Barbara *announcing*

Barbara. Mr. Austin. (*She shows* Austin *in, and retires.*)

Austin. You will do me the justice to acknowledge, Mr. Fenwick, that I have been not long delayed by my devotion to the Graces.

Anthony. So, sir, I find you in my house—

Austin. And charmed to meet you again. It went against my conscience to separate so soon. Youth, Mr. Musgrave, is to us older men a perpetual refreshment.

Anthony. You came here, sir, I suppose, upon some errand?

Austin. My errand, Mr. Musgrave, is to your fair sister. Beauty, as you know, comes before valor.

Anthony. In my own house, and about my own sister, I presume I have the right to ask for something more explicit.

Austin. The right, my dear sir, is beyond question; but it is one, as you were going on to observe, on which no gentleman insists.

Fenwick. Anthony, my good fellow, I think we had better go.

Anthony. I have asked a question.

Austin. Which I was charmed to answer, but which, on repetition, might begin to grow distasteful.

Anthony. In my own house—

Fenwick. For God's sake, Anthony!

Austin. In your aunt's house, young gentleman, I shall be careful to refrain from criticism. I am come upon a visit to a lady: that visit I shall pay; when you desire (if it be possible that you desire it) to resume this singular conversation, select some fitter place. Mr. Fenwick, this afternoon, may I present you to his Royal Highness?

Anthony. Why, sir, I believe you must have misconceived me. I have no wish to offend: at least at present.

AUSTIN. Enough, sir. I was persuaded I had heard amiss. I trust we shall be friends.

FENWICK. Come, Anthony, come: here is your sister.

(*As* FENWICK *and* ANTHONY *go out, C., enter* DOROTHY, *L.*)

SCENE VII

AUSTIN, DOROTHY

DOROTHY. I am told, Mr. Austin, that you wish to see me.

AUSTIN. Madam, can you doubt of that desire? can you question my sincerity?

DOROTHY. Sir, between you and me these compliments are worse than idle: they are unkind. Sure, we are alone!

AUSTIN. I find you in an hour of cruelty, I fear. Yet you have condescended to receive this poor offender; and having done so much, you will not refuse to give him audience.

DOROTHY. You shall have no cause, sir, to complain of me. I listen.

AUSTIN. My fair friend, I have sent myself—a poor ambassador—to plead for your forgiveness. I have been too long absent; too long, I would fain hope, madam, for you; too long for my honor and my love. I am no longer, madam, in my first youth; but I may say that I am not unknown. My fortune, originally small, has not suffered from my husbandry. I have excellent health, an excellent temper, and the purest ardor of affection for your person. I found not on my merits, but on your indulgence. Miss Musgrave, will you honor me with your hand in marriage?

DOROTHY. Mr. Austin, if I thought basely of marriage, I should perhaps accept your offer. There was a time, indeed, when it would have made me proudest among women. I was the more deceived, and have to thank you for a salutary lesson. You chose to count me as a cipher in your rolls of conquest; for six months you left me to my fate; and you come here to-day—prompted, I doubt

not, by an honorable impulse—to offer this tardy reparation. No: it is too late.

AUSTIN. Do you refuse?

DOROTHY. Yours is the blame: we are no longer equal. You have robbed me of the right to marry any one but you; and do you think me, then, so poor in spirit as to accept a husband on compulsion?

AUSTIN. Dorothy, you loved me once.

DOROTHY. Ay, you will never guess how much: you will never live to understand how ignominious a defeat that conquest was. I loved and trusted you: I judged you by myself; think, then, of my humiliation, when, at the touch of trial, all your qualities proved false, and I beheld you the slave of the meanest vanity—selfish, untrue, base! Think, sir, what a humbling of my pride to have been thus deceived: to have taken for my idol such a commonplace imposture as yourself; to have loved—yes, loved—such a shadow, such a mockery of man. And now I am unworthy to be the wife of any gentleman; and you—look me in the face, George—are you worthy to be my husband?

AUSTIN. No, Dorothy, I am not. I was a vain fool; I blundered away the most precious opportunity; and my regret will be lifelong. Do me the justice to accept this full confession of my fault. I am here to-day to own and to repair it.

DOROTHY. Repair it? Sir, you condescend too far.

AUSTIN. I perceive with shame how grievously I had misjudged you. But now, Dorothy, believe me, my eyes are opened. I plead with you, not as my equal, but as one in all ways better than myself. I admire you, not in that trivial sense in which we men are wont to speak of women, but as God's work: as a wise mind, a noble soul, and a most generous heart, from whose society I have all to gain, all to learn. Dorothy, in one word, I love you.

DOROTHY. And what, sir, has wrought this transformation? You knew me of old, or thought you knew me? Is it in six months of selfish absence that your mind has changed? When did that change begin? A week ago? Sure, you would have written! To-day? Sir, if this offer

be anything more than a fresh offense, I have a right to be enlightened.

AUSTIN. Madam, I foresaw this question. So be it: I respect, and I will not deceive you. But give me, first of all, a moment for defense. There are few men of my habits and position who would have done as I have done: sate at the feet of a young boy, accepted his lessons, gone upon his errand: fewer still, who would thus, at the crisis of a love, risk the whole fortune of the soul—love, gratitude, even respect. Yet more than that! For conceive how I respect you, if I, whose lifelong trade has been flattery, stand before you and make the plain confession of a truth that must not only lower me, but deeply wound yourself.

DOROTHY. What means—?

AUSTIN. Young Fenwick, my rival for your heart, he it was that sent me.

DOROTHY. He? Oh, disgrace! He sent you! That was what he meant? Am I fallen so low? Am I your common talk among men? Did you dice for me? Did he kneel? O John, John, how could you! And you, Mr. Austin, whither have you brought me down? shame heaping upon shame—to what end! oh, to what end?

AUSTIN. Madam, you wound me: you look wilfully amiss. Sure, any lady in the land might well be proud to be loved as you are loved, with such nobility as Mr. Fenwick's, with such humility as mine. I came, indeed, in pity, in good-nature, what you will. (See, dearest lady, with what honesty I speak: if I win you, it shall be with the unblemished truth.) All that is gone. Pity? it is myself I pity. I offer you not love—I am not worthy. I ask, I beseech of you: suffer me to wait upon you like a servant, to serve you with my rank, my name, the whole devotion of my life. I am a gentleman—ay, in spite of my fault—an upright gentleman; and I swear to you that you shall order your life and mine at your free will. Dorothy, at your feet, in remorse, in respect, in love—Oh, such love as I have never felt, such love as I derided—I implore, I conjure you to be mine!

DOROTHY. Too late! too late.

AUSTIN. No, no, not too late: not too late for penitence, not too late for love.

DOROTHY. Which do you propose? that I should abuse your compassion, or reward your treachery? George Austin, I have been your mistress, and I will never be your wife.

AUSTIN. Child, dear child, I have not told you all: there is worse still: your brother knows; the boy as good as told me. Dorothy, this is scandal at the door—Oh, let that move you: for that, if not for my sake, for that, if not for love, trust me, trust me again!

DOROTHY. I am so much the more your victim: that is all, and shall that change my heart? The sin must have its wages. This, too, was done long ago: when you stooped to lie to me. The shame is still mine, the fault still yours.

AUSTIN. Child, child, you kill me: you will not understand. Can you not see? the lad will force me to a duel.

DOROTHY. And you will kill him? Shame after shame, threat upon threat. Marry me, or you are dishonored; marry me, or your brother dies: and this man's honor! But my honor and my pride are different. I will encounter all misfortune sooner than degrade myself by an unfaithful marriage. How should I kneel before the altar, and vow to reverence as my husband you, you who deceived me as my lover?

AUSTIN. Dorothy, you misjudge me cruelly; I have deserved it. You will not take me for your husband; why should I wonder? You are right. I have indeed filled your life with calamity: the wages, ay, the wages, of my sin are heavy upon you. But I have one more thing to ask of your pity; and oh, remember, child, who it is that asks it: a man guilty in your sight, void of excuse, but old, and very proud, and most unused to supplication. Dorothy Musgrave, will you forgive George Austin?

DOROTHY. O, George!

AUSTIN. It is the old name: that is all I ask, and more than I deserve. I shall remember, often remember, how and where it was bestowed upon me for the last time. I thank you, Dorothy, from my heart; a heart, child, that

has been too long silent, but is not too old, I thank God! not yet too old, to learn a lesson and to accept a reproof. I will not keep you longer: I will go—I am so bankrupt in credit that I dare not ask you to believe in how much sorrow. But, Dorothy, my acts will speak for me with more persuasion. If it be in my power, you shall suffer no more through me: I will avoid your brother; I will leave this place, I will leave England, to-morrow; you shall no longer be tortured with the neighborhood of your ungenerous lover. Dorothy, farewell!

Scene VIII

Dorothy; *to whom,* Anthony, *L.*

Dorothy. (*On her knees and reaching with her hands.*) George, George! (*Enter* Anthony.)

Anthony. Ha! what are you crying for?

Dorothy. Nothing, dear! (*Rising.*)

Anthony. Is Austin going to marry you?

Dorothy. I shall never marry.

Anthony. I thought as much. You should have come to me.

Dorothy. I know, dear, I know; but there was nothing to come about.

Anthony. It's a lie. You have disgraced the family. You went to John Fenwick: see what he has made of it! But I will have you righted: it shall be atoned in the man's blood.

Dorothy. Anthony! And if I had refused him?

Anthony. You? refuse George Austin? You never had the chance.

Dorothy. I have refused him.

Anthony. Dorothy, you lie. You would shield your lover; but this concerns not you only: it strikes my honor and my father's honor.

Dorothy. I have refused him—refused him, I tell you —refused him. The blame is mine; are you so bad and wicked that you will not see?

ANTHONY. I see this: that man must die.

DOROTHY. He? never! You forget, you forget whom you defy; you run upon your death.

ANTHONY. Ah, my girl, you should have thought of that before. It is too late now.

DOROTHY. Anthony, if I beg you—Anthony, I have tried to be a good sister; I brought you up, dear, nursed you when you were sick, fought for you, hoped for you, loved you—think of it, think of the dear past, think of our home and the happy winter nights, the castles in the fire, the long shining future, and the love that was to forgive and suffer always—Oh, you will spare, you will spare me this.

ANTHONY. I will tell you what I will do, Dolly: I will do just what you taught me—my duty: that, and nothing else.

DOROTHY. O Anthony, you also, you to strike me! Heavens, shall I kill them—I—I that love them, kill them! Miserable, sinful girl! George, George, thank God, you will be far away! Oh, go George, go at once!

ANTHONY. He goes, the coward! Ay, is this more of your contrivance? Madam, you make me blush. But to-day at least I know where I can find him. This afternoon, on the Pantiles, he must dance attendance on the Duke of York. Already he must be there: and there he is at my mercy.

DOROTHY. Thank God, you are deceived: he will not fight. He promised me that; thank God, I have his promise for that.

ANTHONY. Promise! Do you see this? (*producing necklace*) the thing he bribed your maid with? I shall dash it in his teeth before the Duke and before all Tunbridge. Promise, you poor fool? what promise holds against a blow? Get to your knees and pray for him; for, by the God above, if he has any blood in his body, one of us shall die before to-night. [*He goes out.*

DOROTHY. Anthony, Anthony! . . . Oh, my God, George will kill him!

MUSIC: "*Chè farò*," *as the drop falls.*

DROP

Musical Induction: *"Gavotte;" "Iphigénie en Aulide."*
Gluck.

ACT IV

The Stage represents the Pantiles; the alleys fronting the spectators in parallel lines. At the back, a stand of musicians from which the "Gavotte" is repeated on muted strings. The music continues nearly through Scene I. Visitors walking to and fro beneath the limes. A seat in front, L.

Scene I

Miss Foster, Barbara, Menteith; *Visitors*

Miss Foster. (*Entering; escorted by* Menteith, *and followed by* Barbara.) And so, Menteith, here you are once more. And vastly pleased I am to see you, my good fellow, not only for your own sake, but because you harbinger the Beau. (*Sits, L.;* Menteith *standing over her.*)

Menteith. Honored madam, I have had the pleasure to serve Mr. George for more than thirty years. This is a privilege—a very great privilege. I have beheld him in the first societies, moving among the first rank of personages: and none, madam, none outshone him.

Barbara. I assure you, madam, when Mr. Menteith took me to the play, he talked so much of Mr. Austin that I couldn't hear a word of Mr. Kean.

Miss Foster. Well, well, and very right. That was the old school of service, Barbara, which you would do well to imitate. This is a child, Menteith, that I am trying to form.

Menteith. Quite so, madam.

Miss Foster. And are we soon to see our princely guest, Menteith?

Menteith. His Royal Highness, madam? I believe I may say quite so. Mr. George will receive our gallant prince upon the Pantiles (*looking at his watch*) in, I

should say, a matter of twelve minutes from now. Such, madam, is Mr. George's order of the day.

BARBARA. I beg your pardon, madam, I am sure, but are we really to see one of His Majesty's own brothers? That will be pure! Oh, madam, this is better than Carlisle.

MISS FOSTER. The wood-note wild: a loyal Cumbrian, Menteith.

MENTEITH. Eh? Quite so, madam.

MISS FOSTER. When she has seen as much of the Royal Family as you, my good fellow, she will find it vastly less entertaining.

MENTEITH. Yes, madam, indeed; in these distinguished circles, life is but a slavery. None of the best set would relish Tunbridge without Mr. George; Tunbridge and Mr. George (if you'll excuse my plainness, madam) are in a manner of speaking identified; and indeed it was the Dook's desire alone that brought us here.

BARBARA. What? the Duke? Oh, dear! was it for that?

MENTEITH. Though, to be sure, madam, Mr. George would always be charmed to find himself (*bowing*) among so many admired members of his own set.

MISS FOSTER. Upon my word, Menteith, Mr. Austin is as fortunate in his servant as his reputation.

MENTEITH. Quite so, madam. But let me observe that the opportunities I have had of acquiring a knowledge of Mr. George's character have been positively unrivaled. Nobody knows Mr. George like his old attendant. The goodness of that gentleman—but, madam, you will soon be equally fortunate, if, as I understand, it is to be a match.

MISS FOSTER. I hope, Menteith, you are not taking leave of your senses. Is it possible you mean my niece?

MENTEITH. Madam, I have the honor to congratulate you. I put a second curl in Mr. George's hair on purpose.

Scene II

To these, Austin. Menteith *falls back, and* Austin *takes his place in front of* Miss Foster, *his attitude a counterpart of* Menteith's.

Austin. Madam, I hasten to present my homage.

Miss Foster. A truce to compliments! Menteith, your charming fellow there, has set me positively crazy. Dear George Austin, is it true? can it be true?

Austin. Madam, if he has been praising your niece he has been well inspired. If he was speaking, as I spoke an hour ago myself, I wish, Miss Foster, that he had held his tongue. I have indeed offered myself to Miss Dorothy, and she, with the most excellent reason, has refused me.

Miss Foster. Is it possible? why, my dear George Austin . . . then I suppose it is John Fenwick after all!

Austin. Not one of us is worthy.

Miss Foster. This is the most amazing circumstance. You take my breath away. My niece refuse George Austin? why, I give you my word, I thought she had adored you. A perfect scandal: it positively must not get abroad.

Austin. Madam, for that young lady I have a singular regard. Judge me as tenderly as you can, and set it down, if you must, to an old man's vanity—for, Evelina, we are no longer in the heyday of our youth—judge me as you will: I should prefer to have it known.

Miss Foster. Can you? George Austin, you? My youth was nothing; I was a failure; but for you? no, George, you never can, you never must be old. You are the triumph of my generation, George, and of our old friendship, too. Think of my first dance and my first partner. And to have this story—no, I could not bear to have it told of you.

Austin. Madam, there are some ladies over whom it is a boast to have prevailed; there are others whom it is a glory to have loved. And I am so vain, dear Evelina, that

even thus I am proud to link my name with that of Dorothy Musgrave.

Miss Foster. George, you are changed. I would not know you.

Austin. I scarce know myself. But pardon me, dear friend (*taking out his watch*), in less than four minutes our illustrious guest will descend amongst us; and I observe Mr. Fenwick, with whom I have a pressing business. Suffer me, dear Evelina!—

Scene III

To these, Fenwick. Miss Foster *remains seated, L.* Austin *goes R. to* Fenwick, *whom he salutes with great respect.*

Austin. Mr. Fenwick, I have played and lost. That noble lady, justly incensed at my misconduct, has condemned me. Under the burden of such a loss, may I console myself with the esteem of Mr. Fenwick?

Fenwick. She refused you? Pardon me, sir, but was the fault not yours?

Austin. Perhaps, to my shame, I am no novice, Mr. Fenwick; but I have never felt nor striven as to-day. I went upon your errand; but, you may trust me, sir, before I had done I found it was my own. Until to-day I never rightly valued her; sure, she is fit to be a queen. I have a remorse here at my heart to which I am a stranger. Oh! that was a brave life, that was a great heart that I have ruined.

Fenwick. Ay, sir, indeed.

Austin. But, sir, it is not to lament the irretrievable that I intrude myself upon your leisure. There is something to be done, to save, at least to spare, that lady. You did not fail to observe the brother?

Fenwick. No, sir, he knows all; and being both intemperate and ignorant—

Austin. Surely. I know. I have to ask you then to

find what friends you can among this company; and if you have none, to make them. Let everybody hear the news. Tell it (if I may offer the suggestion) with humor: how Mr. Austin, somewhat upon the wane, but still filled with sufficiency, gloriously presumed and was most ingloriously set down by a young lady from the north: the lady's name a secret, which you will permit to be divined. The laugh—the position of the hero—will make it circulate;—you perceive I am in earnest;—and in this way I believe our young friend will find himself forestalled.

FENWICK. Mr. Austin, I would not have dared to ask so much of you; I will go further: were the positions changed, I should fear to follow your example.

AUSTIN. Child, child, you could not afford it.

SCENE IV

To these, the ROYAL DUKE, *C.; then, immediately,* ANTHONY, *L.* FENWICK *crosses to* MISS FOSTER, *R.* AUSTIN *accosts the Duke, C., in dumb show; the muted strings take up a new air, Mozart's "Anglaise"; couples passing under the limes, and forming a group behind* AUSTIN *and the* DUKE. ANTHONY *in front, L., watches* AUSTIN, *who, as he turns from the* DUKE, *sees him and comes forward with extended hand.*

AUSTIN. Dear child, let me present you to his Royal Highness.

ANTHONY. (*With necklace.*) Mr. Austin, do you recognize the bribe you gave my sister's maid?

AUSTIN. Hush, sir, hush! you forget the presence of the Duke.

ANTHONY. Mr. Austin, you are a coward and a scoundrel.

AUSTIN. My child, you will regret these words: I refuse your quarrel.

ANTHONY. You do? Take that. (*He strikes* AUSTIN *on the mouth. At the moment of the blow—*)

Scene V

To these, Dorothy, *L. U. E.* Dorothy, *unseen by* Austin, *shrieks. Sensation. Music stops.* Tableau.

Austin. (*Recovering his composure.*) Your Royal Highness, suffer me to excuse the disrespect of this young gentleman. He has so much apology, and I have, I hope, so good a credit, as incline me to accept this blow. But I must beg of your Highness, and, gentlemen, all of you here present, to bear with me while I will explain what is too capable of misconstruction. I am the rejected suitor of this young gentleman's sister; of Miss Dorothy Musgrave: a lady whom I singularly honor and esteem; a word from whom (if I could hope that word) would fill my life with happiness. I was not worthy of that lady; when I was defeated in fair field, I presumed to make advances through her maid. See in how laughable a manner fate repaid me! The waiting-girl derided, the mistress denied, and now comes in this very ardent champion who publicly insults me. My vanity is cured; you will judge it right, I am persuaded, all of you, that I should accept my proper punishment in silence; you, my Lord Duke, to pardon this young gentleman; and you, Mr. Musgrave, to spare me further provocation, which I am determined to ignore.

Dorothy. (*Rushing forward, falling at* Austin's *knees, and seizing his hands.*) George, George, it was for me. My hero! take me! What you will!

Austin. (*In an agony.*) My dear creature, remember that we are in public. (*Raising her.*) Your Royal Highness, may I present you Mrs. George Frederick Austin? (*The curtain falls on a few bars of the "Lass of Richmond Hill."*)

THE END